The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Consumer experiences of buying, servicing and repairing new cars.

Final Report

Prepared for: The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Colmar Brunton Contact: David Spicer, Research Director, 03 8640 5200
Email: david.spicer@colmarbrunton.com
Issue Date: 2 May 2017

colmar brunton.

Contents

Index of Figures

Index of Tables

1. Executive summary

This report was prepared for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and contains findings from an online stratified consumer survey of 1,500 new car buyers[1] across Australia conducted by Colmar Brunton. The survey was conducted in November 2016.

There were four core objectives for the research. The first two related to the availability of information and involved seeking to determine if new car buyers:

- view they have access to sufficient and accurate information; and
- view they can usefully apply that information to make informed purchase decisions.

The third and fourth objectives for the research were to determine new car buyer preferences and experiences on particular matters relevant to the ACCC's new car retailing industry market study. These were:

- the preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and performance of a new car buyer's new car; and
- the experiences and behaviours with new car buyers with their car post sale, including preferences related to servicing and repair.

1.1. Access to sufficient and accurate information

Most new car buyers perceived that they had access to reliable and accurate information that they needed to make an informed decision about the purchase of a new car.

New car buyers reported that they typically spent from one week to a month researching their purchase (55%). Three in ten took more than a month (31%) while one in ten spent less than a week (12%). They indicated that they visited a median of 2 dealers and considered a median of 2 car models.

New car buyers indicated that they most commonly used information on manufacturers' websites to inform their decisions (65%)[2] followed by in-person consultation with car sales-persons[3] (54%). Car magazines were rarely used either online (9%) or in hard copy (7%).

Three-quarters of new car buyers received information from a sales-person before purchasing their new car (74%). The information provided by the sales-person was reported to influence the decision of two thirds of these new car buyers (66%). New car buyers indicated that the information most commonly provided by a sales-person related to safety features and warranties (each 69%).

1 A 'new car buyer' was defined for this survey to be an individual who purchased a car for personal use in the last five years and who played a role in the decision-making process and drove the car following purchase.

2 The popularity of the internet as a primary resource for researching new car choices is congruent with findings from a recent Roy Morgan Research study into new car purchasing. See: http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7178-new-car-buyers-using-internet-for-automotive-research-december-2016-201703141214. It should be noted that the Roy Morgan Research used a different sample design and had a different focus to the current study. The Roy Morgan Research focussed on people who intended to purchase a car in the future, as opposed to those that had purchased in the past five years as was the case for this study.

3 In this report, the term 'sales-person' is defined as the car seller/dealer/representative who sold the buyer the car at the dealership or elsewhere. The definition of 'sales-person' provided in the questionnaire to new car buyers was: "by sales-person we mean the car seller/dealer/retailer/representative. Please give answers about your most recent new car purchase if you have bought more than one".

Only one in ten new car buyers perceived that the information provided by the sales-person was inaccurate (10%). Information that was perceived to be inaccurate most commonly related to features that were perceived to be missing from the car, servicing packages and/or fuel efficiency (only 1%-3% of all new car buyers).

1.2. Applying information to make informed purchase decisions

The findings from this survey suggest that most new car buyers view that they can effectively source the information that they need, and apply what they have learnt to the purchase decision.

Almost all new car buyers felt they had made a good decision in their choice of car. Three-quarters of new car buyers felt they made exactly the right decision (73%). Few felt that they made either a 'passable' or 'completely wrong' decision (4%).

Many new car buyers perceived that it was easy to find the reliable information that they needed to inform their purchase. When asked: 'What, if anything made it difficult to inform yourself about your new car purchase?'; nearly six in ten responded that nothing made it difficult (58%).

For those new car buyers that reported difficulties in applying the information available to their purchase, the most common reported difficulties related to:

- perceptions of bias in the information available (13% of all new car buyers);
- the overwhelming volume of information (13%); and
- the overly technical nature of the information (10%).

Younger new car buyers[4] reported greater difficulty in sourcing and applying the information they needed to inform their purchase with these buyers reporting that they found information available:

- biased (19% vs. 9% of older new car buyers)
- overly technical and hard to understand (17% vs. 7%)
- hard to access (13% vs. 4%).

One-third of new car buyers stated that they would do things differently the next time they purchased a new car, given their experiences of buying the car referred to in the survey (33%). Amongst these new car buyers, one of the most common things that would be done differently was to undertake more research, particularly around the make or models of cars available (22%). Taking more time to consider their options and test drive more cars were also commonly stated (27% and 30% respectively).

1.3. New car buyers preferences and experiences with their car's fuel consumption, emissions and car performance

Fuel consumption

[4] Younger new car buyers are defined as those aged 18-34 years, older new car buyers are defined as those aged 50+ years.

Nearly six in ten new car buyers stated that fuel consumption influenced their choice of new car (57%). This is the third most common influencing factor in the study, behind price (74%) and type of vehicle (68%).

Six in ten new car buyers specifically sought or received information about fuel consumption for their new car (60%). Of these, most were informed by the fuel consumption label on the car (56%) or by the sales-person (45%).

Fuel consumption information was of greater interest to new car buyers in regional areas[5] and buyers who frequently bought new cars.[6] Almost seven in ten regional new car buyers sought fuel consumption information, compared with closer to six in ten metropolitan new car buyers (67% vs. 58%). The same finding was apparent for frequent new car buyers compared to first-time buyers (67% vs. 53%).

Post-sale, nearly eight in ten new car buyers who sought information about fuel consumption felt that that their new car got the same or better fuel consumption as indicated (77%). However, nearly two in ten felt that the car got worse fuel consumption than expected (16%).

Amongst all new car buyers, nearly one in ten (7%) reported that their car had ‘unexpectedly’ high fuel consumption post-purchase.

Emissions

One in five new car buyers cited ‘environmental impact’ (which included car emissions, energy efficiency and other matters) as a factor that influenced their choice of new car (18%). These new car buyers indicated that information on environmental impact was amongst the hardest to find. One in seven new car buyers who sought information about environmental impacts expressed difficulties sourcing the information they needed (15%). This information was the third most difficult to find after vehicle reliability and the cost of parts.

Performance

Four in ten new car buyers indicated that car performance was a factor that influenced their choice of car (39%). However, price and vehicle type were far stronger influencing factors (74% and 68% respectively).

New car buyers perceived that information about performance was relatively easy to find. Only one in ten new car buyers who looked for information about performance found it difficult to find (8%). Information about the cost of parts and reliability were reported to be far more difficult to find (26% and 16% respectively).

1.4. Experiences and behaviours of new car buyers with their car post sale

Preferences for service

---

5 For this study, ‘regional area’ was defined as any new car buyer who lived outside of Greater Capital City areas.
6 ‘Frequent new car buyer’ is someone who purchased a new car every four years or more often.

Dealership servicing was preferred by almost all new car buyers. Almost nine in ten new car buyers who had a routine service reported that they took their car for a service at a dealership (86%). Just over one in ten new car buyers indicated that they opted for independent servicing (14%).

The choice of dealership servicing was reported by new car buyers as being driven by a desire to save money. Four in ten new car buyers chose dealership servicing because it was free or part of a package (37%).

The perception that servicing must be done at a dealership because of the conditions of a warranty was held by a segment of new car buyers. Two in ten new car buyers perceived that dealership servicing was mandatory under the terms of their warranty and/or were worried about voiding their warranty by using an independent mechanic (23% and 22% respectively).

The main reasons given by new car buyers for choosing independent servicing also related to saving money and convenience. Half of new car buyers who chose independent servicing did so because it was perceived to be cheaper than the dealership (54%), and/or easy to get to (50%).

Common issues reported by new car buyers with cars post purchase

One-third of new car buyers reported that they had issue/s with their new car post purchase (34%).[7] The most commonly reported issues related to technology in the car (8%), interior (such as upholstery), and unexpectedly high fuel consumption (7% each).

Higher-end vehicles were reported to have more issues than lower-end vehicles. Most notably, more higher-end buyers reported issues with high fuel consumption compared with lower-end car buyers (9% vs. 4%).[8]

Preferences for repairs

Three-fifths of new car buyers who had an issue with their new car indicated that they took it to a mechanic for repairs (60%). Almost all of these new car buyers reported that they opted for a dealership repair (90%). One in ten stated that they used an independent mechanic (10%).

The main reason given by new car buyers for choosing a dealership repair was based on a perception of voiding the car's warranty (30%). Similarly, one-third of new car buyers perceived that dealership repairs were mandatory under a warranty (28%).

The reasons given by new car buyers for choosing independent repairs were similar to those for choosing independent servicing. New car buyers most commonly reported choosing independent mechanics to save money (32%) and/or because the independent mechanic was close by (24%). New car buyers also indicated that loyalty to a particular independent mechanic also played a role (23%).

---

7 Choice undertook a survey in 2016 that sampled 1,505 people across Australia. The focus of the Choice survey was on experiences of 'lemon cars', i.e., cars with manufacturing defects that caused issues in the years following purchase. The sample design had some similarities to this survey, however the focus and framing of questions was somewhat different. For example, estimates of 'issues with new cars' were assessed in terms of 'severe' vs. 'minor' problems, which differs from the way in which the question was framed in this survey where a list of possible issues was presented. This should be considered when considering or comparing findings. A report from the Choice survey can be found here: https://www.choice.com.au/transport/cars/general/articles/lemon-cars-and-consumer-law.

8 Higher end cars were defined as those costing $35,000 or more. Lower end cars were defined as costing between $10,000 and $24,000. A mid-range category of car was also included in the detailed analysis of findings.

Over half of new car buyers who chose an independent repair reported that their independent mechanic experienced issues when fixing the new car (54%)[9]. These issues most commonly related to access to information about the car online or accessing on-board diagnostics (31% and 27% respectively).

9 The reader should note that only n=30 or 2% or the total sample had a repair done at an independent mechanic.

1.5. Conclusions – in summary

Do new car buyers view that they have sufficient and accurate information?

Most new car buyers perceived that they had sufficient information to make informed decisions about their new car purchase. However, one in ten new car buyers perceived that there is an overwhelming amount of information available to them that can be difficult to compare. Most new car buyers reported that they had confidence in the information that they obtained when buying a new car. However, around one in ten felt that the information available was biased or not objective and/or untrustworthy.

Do new car buyers usefully apply that information to make informed purchase decisions?

Most new car buyers perceive that they can effectively source the information that they need, and apply what they have learnt to their purchase decision. Six in ten new car buyers perceived that it was easy to find reliable information that they needed to inform their purchase. Almost all new car buyers felt that they had made a good decision when they purchased their new car. Only one in twenty felt that they made a poor choice. The most common reason for feeling that a poor decision was made related to price – paying too much for the car.

Preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and performance of a new car buyer's new car

Fuel consumption: Nearly six in ten new car buyers stated that fuel consumption influenced their choice of new car. Post-sale, nearly eight in ten new car buyers who sought information about fuel consumption felt that the information obtained was accurate. However, nearly two in ten felt that the car got worse fuel consumption than expected.

Emissions: One in five new car buyers cited emissions as a factor that influenced their choice of new car. New car buyers for whom emissions were an influencing factor indicated that information on environmental impacts was amongst the hardest to find. One in seven new car buyers expressed difficulties in sourcing this type of information.

Vehicle performance: Four in ten new car buyers indicated that car performance was a factor that influenced their choice of car. New car buyers perceived that information about performance was relatively easy to find, only one in ten reported that they found it difficult to find this type of information.

New car buyer experiences and preferences post sale in service and repair

Servicing: Almost nine in ten new car buyers indicated that they chose to take their car to a dealership for servicing, just over one in ten opted for independent servicing. The most common reasons given by new car buyers for choosing a dealership was because it was free or part of a package. There also appears to be a belief by some new car buyers that new cars *must* be serviced at a dealership. Two in ten new car buyers stated that they chose dealership servicing over independent servicing due to a perception that it would void their warranty.

Repairs: Nine in ten new car buyers who had an issue with their car and took it to a mechanic opted for a dealership repair. The remaining one in ten reported that they chose an independent repair. The primary influencer on the choice of a dealership repair was a perception that that dealership repairs were either mandatory under the vehicle's warranty; and/or a concern that independent repair would void the warranty. These beliefs were held by three in ten new car buyers who had a dealership repair.

All conclusions from this study are listed at the end of this report.

2. Introduction

This report was prepared for the ACCC and contains findings from an online stratified consumer survey of 1,500 new car buyers across Australia conducted by Colmar Brunton.[10]

2.1. The ACCC market study into the new car retailing industry

The ACCC promotes competition and fair trade in markets to benefit consumers, businesses, and the community. The ACCC also regulates national infrastructure services. The ACCC's primary responsibility is to ensure that individuals and businesses comply with Australian competition, fair trading, and consumer protection laws - in particular the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010.*

As part of its role, the ACCC undertakes in-depth market, sector or industry reviews as part of its role in promoting effective competition in markets. This involves the ACCC assessing whether market characteristics are conducive to competition and benefiting consumers, or whether market imperfections require intervention by the ACCC or others. These reviews also assist to identify good competitive practices within industries and encourage it more broadly.

Consumer issues arising in the new car retailing industry are a priority area for the ACCC. In June 2016, the ACCC announced that it would undertake a market study into the new car retailing industry which would be informed by a range of recent and ongoing enforcement, education and research projects. In particular, the study noted it would examine practices relating to:

- consumer guarantees, warranties and new cars;
- fuel consumption, carbon dioxide (CO_2) and noxious emissions, and car performance;
- post-sale service arrangements; and
- access to repair and service information and data.

The purpose of the ACCC's new car retailing industry market study is to gain a better understanding of how the industry operates, while focusing on key issues that have come to the ACCC's attention. This includes assessing whether market characteristics, including new car buyer behaviours and expectations, are conducive to competition.

This survey

This consumer survey was undertaken to assist in informing the ACCC's understanding of consumer behaviours and expectations by using a quantitative survey.

[10] A 'new car buyer' was defined by this survey to be an individual who purchased a car for personal use in the last five years and who played a role in the decision-making process and drove the car following purchase.

There were four core objectives for the research. The first two related to the availability of information and involved seeking to determine if new car buyers:

- view they have access to sufficient and accurate information; and
- view they can usefully apply that information to make informed purchase decisions.

The third and fourth objectives for the research was to determine new car buyer preferences and experiences on particular matters relevant to the ACCC’s new car retailing industry market study. These were:

- preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and performance of a new car buyer’s new car; and
- experiences and behaviours with new car buyers with their car post sale, including preferences related to service and repair.

To address these objectives, the questionnaire included a range of measures of:

- consumers’ expectations and experiences when purchasing a new car;
- the amount of research that was undertaken by a consumer prior to purchase;
- consumer perceptions about the type and quality of information provided by the sales-person;
- the factors that most influence consumer purchasing decisions;
- consumers’ experiences and knowledge of warranties and servicing options;
- consumer behaviour when seeking repairs or servicing from dealers or independent mechanics (including repairs for defects under warranty); and
- the likely impact of these experiences on future purchasing decisions.

2.2. Methodology in brief

The findings in this report are based on an online survey of 1,500 Australians who bought a new car in the last five years (referred to as ‘new car buyers’). The sample for the survey contained only those who purchased a new car for personal use in the last five years, where the respondent played a role in the decision-making process and was a driver of the car following purchase. The sample was stratified to be representative of the Australian population by location, age, and gender.

A full account of the methodology is supplemented in this report’s corresponding Appendices document.

2.3. Conventions used in this report

DK	Abbreviation of ‘Don’t Know’ (sometimes also phrased as ‘can’t remember’ in the questionnaire).
MR	Indicates a Multiple Response set of items. The sum of these items will likely exceed 100% because new car buyers were permitted to select more than one option.
X% X%	‘Net’ bars: The sum of two or more data points for quick reference.
Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?	The question number and exact wording as it appeared in the online questionnaire.
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)	The ‘base’: a description of the type and number of new car buyers who answered a question (for example ‘all new car buyers’ or ‘new car buyers who had a repair done for an issue with the new car’).

Please note that in some instances, figures and tables will not sum to 100% due to rounding.

2.4. Comparisons made in this report

This report contains findings for each measure from the survey. In addition, comparisons are made by selected variables to demonstrate differences in attitudes and behaviours for different types of new car buyers. The groups of new car buyers that were compared were:

- from different demographic and sociographic backgrounds – comparisons were made by age, state/territory and regional/metropolitan areas;
- buyers who selected different types of car – car size, value and brand; and
- buyers who reported a range of different experiences – purchase from different types of dealership, experience of a manufacturing defect.

Comparing between different makes of car (e.g. Toyota, Holden, Mazda) was beyond the scope of this study. The intention of the research was to take a sector-wide view of new car purchasing, rather than an examination of practices at different businesses.

These comparisons are presented in a series of tables that accompany the charts containing the overall findings. In the body of this report, the tables use a simple colour-coding system where different subgroup are noted as being more or less likely to provide a certain response. Specifically, subgroups within the sample are compared against the total figure for all new car buyers. This is represented using blue and orange shading to represent statistically higher or lower figures respectively.

In some instances, 'don't know' responses have been excluded from the column variables in the tables. For example, if a new car buyer did not know the value of their new car, they have been excluded from comparisons made by car value. These exclusions are very small and do not impact on the findings.

Provided below is an example table which demonstrates differences in the factors that influence car buying decisions by age. Based on this 'quick reference' comparison example, the following can be understood.

- the responses of new car buyers from three age brackets are compared to the total figure;
- an orange shaded cell indicates that the proportion of responses from a given age bracket is significantly lower than the total population; and
- a blue shaded cell indicates that the proportion of responses is significantly higher than that of the total population.

In this case, it can be concluded that older people are generally more price-sensitive when it comes to car purchases when compared with younger people.

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Considered price of new car	74%	67%	74%	80%

All comparisons are reported at a 95% confidence interval – this means that where a significant difference is reported for the sample, we can be 95% confident that this difference exists in the population of new car buyers. Non-significant differences are not described in this report. Where a comparative measure is not reported, the reader can assume that no significant differences were observed.

A list of the sub-populations that were grouped and compared are contained in the Appendices document accompanying this report. The Appendices also contain more detailed statistical comparison where subgroups were also compared against each other. For example, males compared with females; younger, mid-aged compared with older new car buyers etc. These tables are intended for a technical audience.

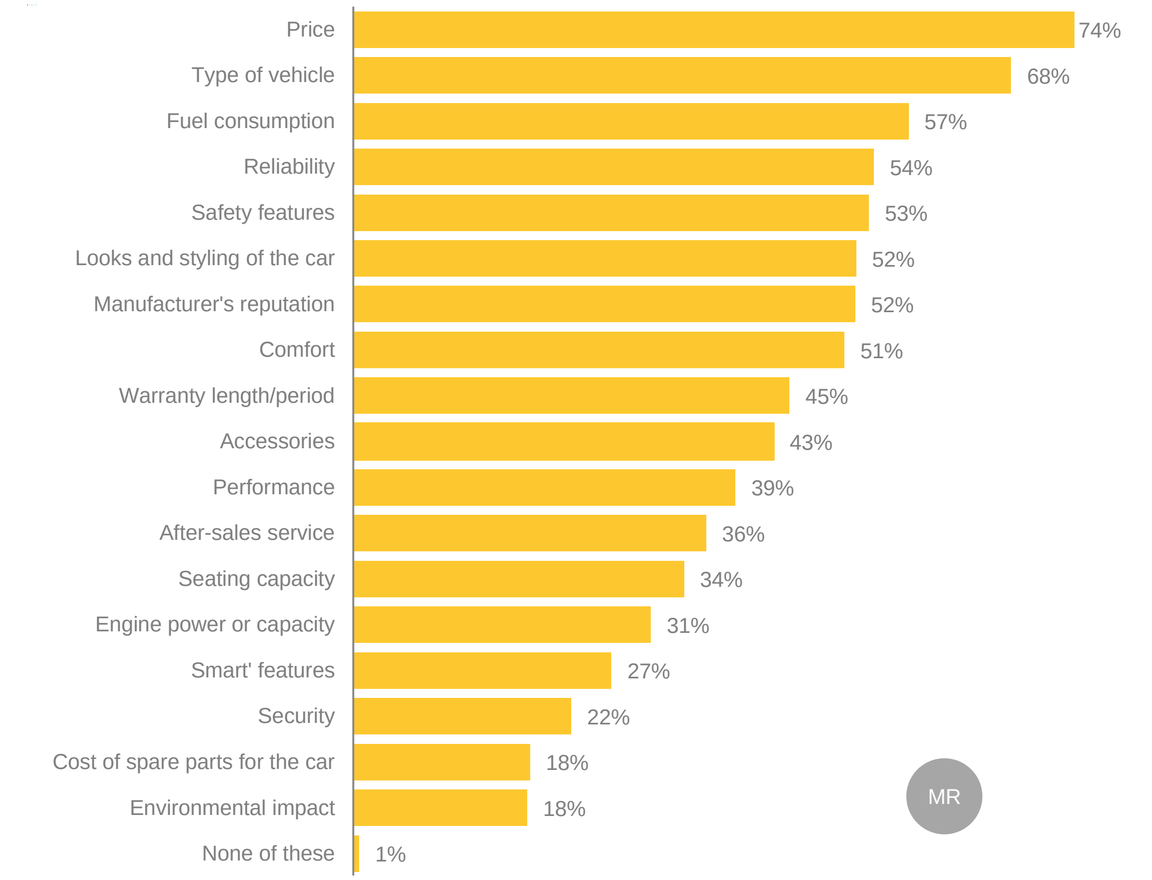
3. Experiences pre-sale: Deciding to buy a new car

3.1. Influencing factors

Three quarters of new car buyers reported that they consider price to be an influential factor in purchasing their new car (74%) ("influencing factor[11]"), while seven in ten consider the type of vehicle when making their decision (68%). Fuel consumption of the car was ranked third as an influencing factor (57%). Considerations around warranties were considered as an influencing factor by a smaller proportion of new car buyers (45%).

Cost of spare parts and environmental impacts were considered by fewer new car buyers, with only one fifth of new car buyers considering these factors (each 18%).

Figure 1: Influencing factors



Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

11 To define 'influencing factors', all new car buyers were asked :which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?". These factors were provided in a list of options that allowed for multiple response (see q.19 in the Appendix to this report).

Older new car buyers (50+ years) had a different set of influencing factors compared with mid-aged (35-49) and younger (18-34) new car buyers. For example:

- 80% of older new car buyers considered the price of the car compared with 74% of mid-aged and 67% younger new car buyers;
- 78% of older new car buyers considered the type of vehicle they were purchasing compared with 65% of mid-aged and 57% of younger new car buyers; and
- 62% of older new car buyers considered fuel consumption compared with 53% of mid-aged and 55% of younger new car buyers.

A similar pattern of response was seen for safety features, warranties, accessories, after-sales service, and engine capacity. All significant differences by age for these influencing factors are listed in the table below.

Table 1: Influencing factors by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Price	74%	67%	74%	80%
Type of vehicle	68%	57%	65%	78%
Fuel consumption	57%	55%	53%	62%
Reliability	54%	53%	52%	56%
Safety features of the car	53%	46%	50%	61%
Look and styling of the car	52%	49%	50%	55%
Manufacturer's reputation	52%	38%	50%	64%
Comfort	51%	45%	50%	55%
Warranty length/period	45%	38%	45%	51%
Accessories	43%	38%	40%	50%
Performance	39%	38%	40%	40%
After-sales service	36%	30%	31%	46%
Seating capacity	34%	29%	37%	36%
Engine power or capacity	31%	25%	29%	36%
Smart features	27%	30%	24%	26%
Security	22%	24%	20%	23%
Cost of spare parts for the car	18%	19%	18%	18%
Environmental impact	18%	22%	16%	17%
None of these	1%	1%	0%	1%

Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car? MR
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

New car buyers who purchased more expensive vehicles ($35k+) also had a different set of influencing factors compared with buyers who purchased a less expensive vehicle. For example, higher-end new car buyers were less influenced by price – 68% reported that price was an influential factor compared with 84% of lower end ($10k-$24k) and 75% of mid-range new car buyers ($25k-$35k).

New car buyers who purchased a more expensive model of car were more likely to consider particular features of the car that they purchased such as:

- accessories (49% vs. 38% of lower end new car buyers and 42% of mid-range new car buyers)
- 'smart features' (36% vs. 19% of lower end new car buyers and 23% of mid-range new car buyers).

The performance of the car was also more important to high end buyers (51% vs. 29% and 36% of lower end and mid-range buyers respectively).

However, no significant differences were seen specifically for warranty period or fuel consumption – similar proportions of new car buyers considered these factors regardless of the value of the car.

Table 2: Influencing factors by value of car

		Car Value*		
	Total	$10K-$24K (lower end)	$25K-$35K (mid-range)	$35K+ (higher-end)
n=	*1,334*	*428*	*396*	*510*
Price	75%	84%	75%	68%
Type of vehicle	68%	69%	69%	67%
Fuel consumption	57%	60%	59%	55%
Reliability	54%	55%	52%	54%
Safety features of the car	54%	50%	53%	57%
Look and styling of the car	52%	49%	55%	53%
Manufacturer's reputation	52%	52%	51%	53%
Comfort	51%	45%	50%	57%
Warranty length/period	45%	45%	43%	47%
Accessories	44%	38%	42%	49%
Performance	40%	29%	36%	51%
After-sales service	36%	38%	37%	34%
Seating capacity	34%	30%	31%	40%
Engine power or capacity	31%	22%	29%	39%
Smart features	27%	19%	23%	36%
Security	23%	19%	19%	28%
Cost of spare parts for the car	18%	17%	20%	18%
Environmental impact	18%	17%	18%	19%
None of these	1%	0%	1%	0%

Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall the value of their car (n=1,334)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Frequent new car buyers (purchase 1-4 years) also reported a different set of influencing factors when compared to infrequent (purchase 5+ years) or first-time new car buyers.

Frequent new car buyers tended to be less likely to be influenced by a range of factors including:

- price (62% vs. 80% of both infrequent and first-time new car buyers);
- type of vehicle (56% vs. 74% of infrequent buyers and 72% of first-time buyers);
- fuel consumption (51% vs. 61% of both infrequent and first-time new car buyer) ;
- safety features of the car (48% vs. 61% of infrequent new car buyers); and
- comfort (46% vs. 56% of infrequent new car buyers).

No significant differences were seen for the influence of warranty lengths for frequent vs. infrequent new car buyers.

Table 3: Influencing factors by frequency of car purchase

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Price	74%	62%	80%	80%
Type of vehicle	68%	56%	74%	72%
Fuel consumption	58%	51%	61%	61%
Reliability	54%	49%	57%	57%
Safety features of the car	54%	48%	61%	49%
Look and styling of the car	53%	46%	56%	56%
Manufacturer's reputation	52%	49%	56%	50%
Comfort	51%	46%	56%	49%
Warranty length/period	46%	42%	49%	47%
Accessories	44%	41%	48%	42%
Performance	40%	41%	40%	40%
After-sales service	37%	33%	40%	37%
Seating capacity	35%	33%	39%	28%
Engine power or capacity	31%	34%	33%	23%
Smart features	28%	30%	28%	22%
Security	23%	22%	25%	19%
Cost of spare parts for the car	19%	20%	19%	15%
Environmental impact	18%	19%	17%	19%
None of these	1%	1%	1%	0%

Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

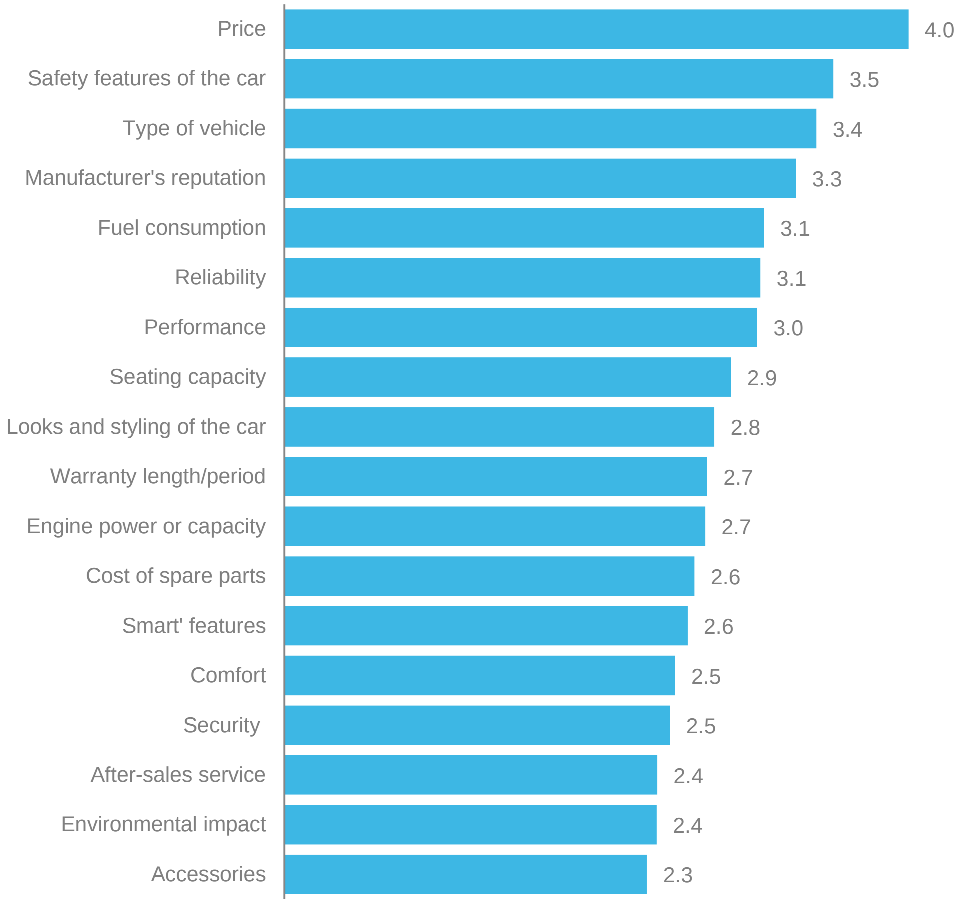
3.2. Importance of influencing factors

New car buyers were also asked to rank the influencing factors that they had nominated in order of importance (where more than one factor was selected)[12].

Price was not only the most frequently considered influencing factor, but was also the most highly ranked in terms of importance (mean rank from 1-5 of 4.0). Safety features, the type of vehicle and the manufacturer's reputation were also ranked highly with means of 3.5, 3.4 and 3.3 respectively. The length and period of warranties was seen as moderately important by those that considered this factor, with a mean of 2.7.

Factors such as after sales service (2.4), the environmental impact (2.4) and car accessories (2.3) were considered to be least important.

Figure 2: Importance of influencing factors



Q 19B: What was the most and least important factors to you when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?
Base: Variable, depends on number of people seeking each type of information and ranked as being in top-five most important. Range n=98 to n=916. A detailed list of all base sizes is included in Appendix 6.

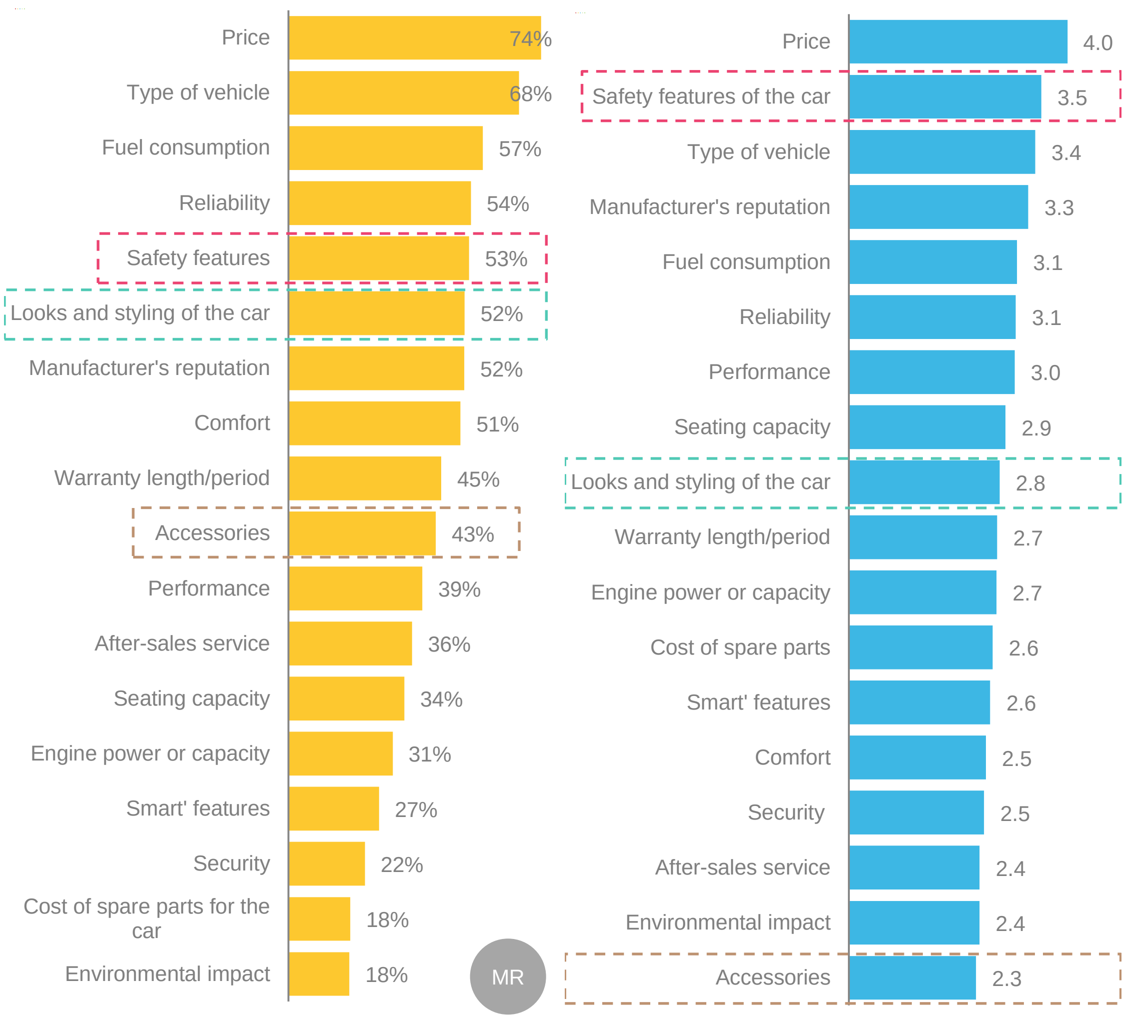
[12] New car buyers were asked about 'influencing factors' that they considered when purchasing their car. For those buyers that selected an option from the list, they were then required to rank which of those was most important (for those with over 5 factors they considered when purchasing their car they were only asked to rank their top 5). Therefore, it is important to note when interpreting findings about 'importance of influencing factors' that each ranked item is based on new car buyers who selected this influencing factor and not of the total population of new car buyers.

While some influencing factors were relatively commonly selected, they are not always ranked as being very important. Conversely, some influencing factors were selected by relatively few car buyers, yet were considered by these buyers as being of great importance. Notable examples of this type of gap in selection of an influencing factor vs. perceived importance include:

- safety features were considered by only half of all new car buyers (53%), however, for these new car buyers, safety features are among the most important factors considered (mean rank out of five 3.5);
- in contrast half of all new car buyers indicated that looks and styling of the car was an influencing factor (52%), however when ranked against other factors it was considered to be less important (2.8); and
- a similar pattern was seen for accessories: two fifths of new car buyers considered accessories as an influencing factor (43%), yet its importance was perceived to be much lower (2.3).

Figure 3: Influencing factors and their importance - comparison

Selected as an influencing factor | Average importance rank (range 1-5)



Q 19: Which of these factors did you consider when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?
Q 19B: What was the most and least important factors to you when you were making the decision to buy your most recent new car?
Base: Variable, depends on number of people seeking each type of information and ranked as being in top-five most important. Range n=98 to n=916. A detailed list of all base sizes is included in Appendix 6.

3.3. Ease of finding information to inform decision-making

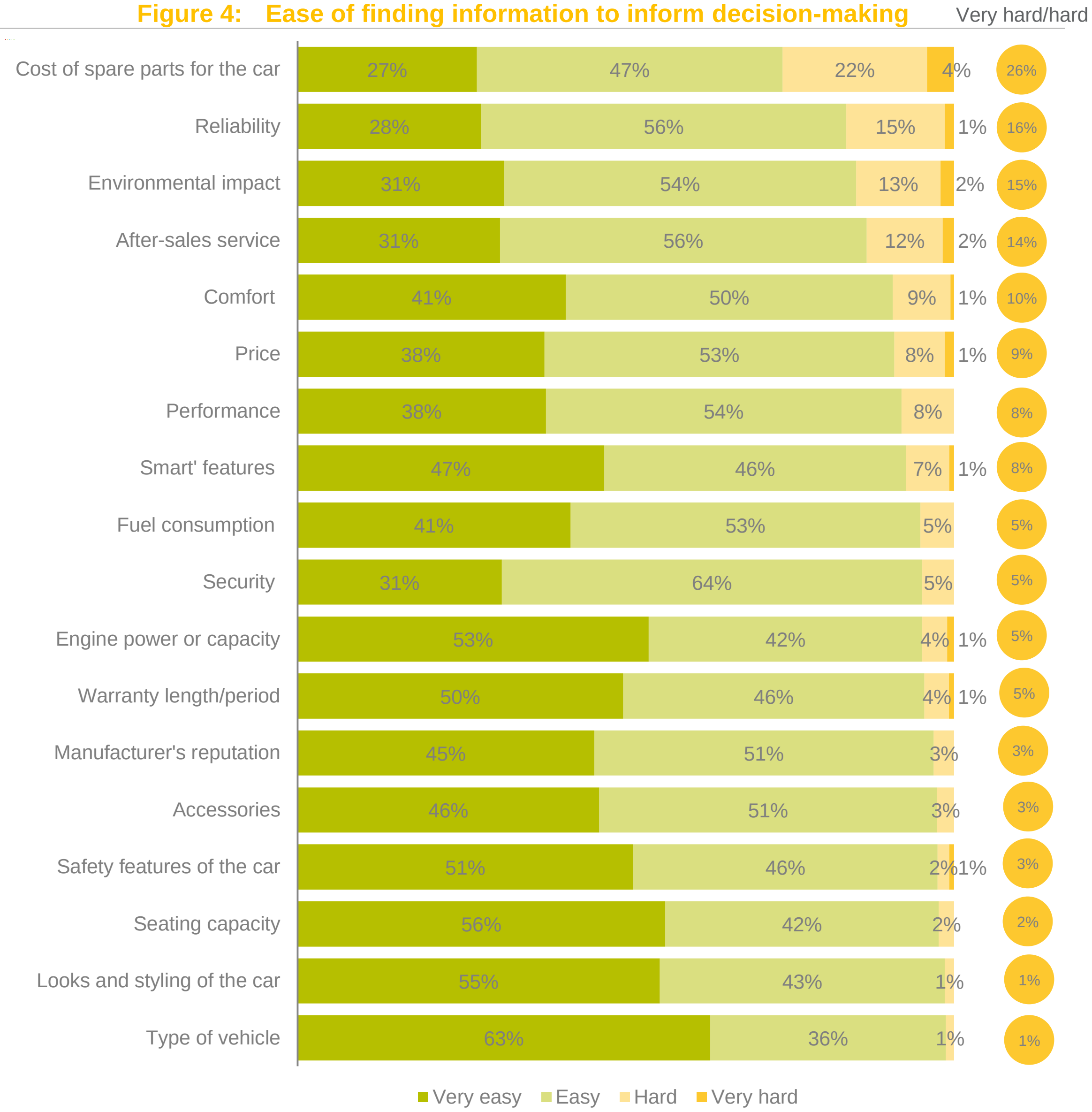
Most new car buyers reported little difficulty in sourcing the information they required to inform their purchases. In almost all cases, most new car buyers who sought different types of information reported that it was either easy or very easy to find the information they required.

However, some specific types of information appeared to be harder to find than others. Based on the number of people who sought each type of information (i.e. not the total population of new car buyers), the types of information that were reported by new car buyers as hard to find were:

- cost of spare parts (26%);
- reliability (16%);
- the likely environmental impact of the car (15%);
- after sales servicing options and costs (14%); and
- the level of comfort offered by the car (10%).

Minor demographic differences were observed for this set of measures; however, no clear pattern of difference was observed across the types of information.

Figure 4: Ease of finding information to inform decision-making



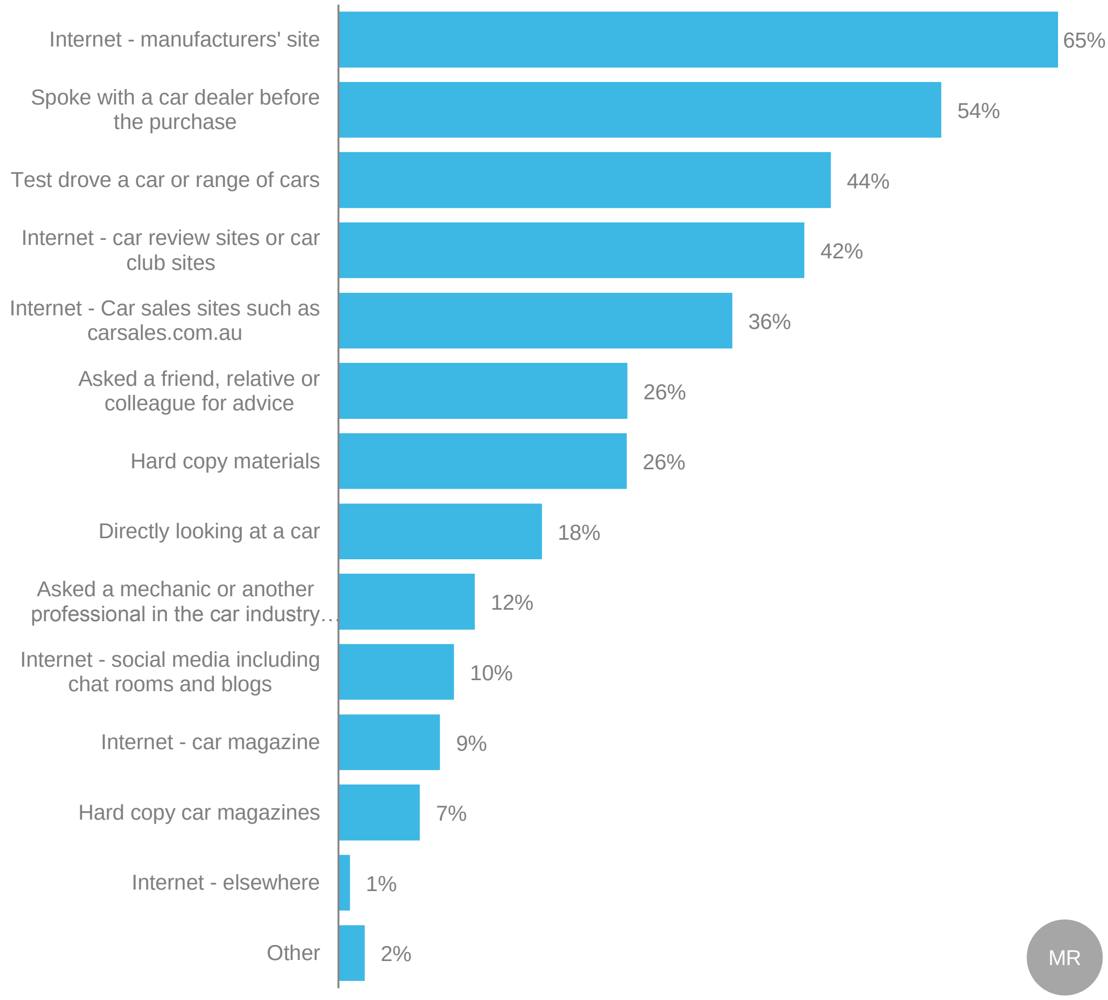
Q 21: Was finding reliable information about the following things easy or hard?
Base: Variable, depends on number of people seeking each type of information. Range n=269 to n=1,115

3.4. Where information was sourced from

New car buyers reported that car manufacturers' websites were the primary source of information to inform their research. Nearly two thirds of new car buyers sourced information from a manufacturer's website (65%), while over a half spoke with a sales-person (54%). Two fifths went on test drives or checked car review and club sites (44% and 42% respectively). A third of new car buyers also used car sales sites (36%).

Less commonly, one in ten buyers checked social media (10%), and fewer again used car magazines either online or in hard copy (9% and 7% respectively).

Figure 5: Sources used to research car purchase



Q 20: What were all the places where you looked for information to inform your purchase? Please select all that apply.
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,491)

Overall, younger new car buyers (18-34 years) were more likely to use the Internet as a source of information, whereas older new car buyers (50+ years) were more likely to use in-person or physical means to inform their purchase.

For example, 47% of younger new car buyers used car review sites online vs. 37% of older new car buyers. Similarly, 43% of younger new car buyers used online car sales sites vs. 30% of older new car buyers.

Conversely, 64% of older new car buyers stated they spoke with a dealer before purchase vs. 46% of the younger population of new car buyers. This difference was also seen for test-driving multiple cars – 52% of older new car buyers vs. 36% of younger new car buyers.

Table 4: Sources of information by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,491*	*463*	*447*	*581*
Internet - manufacturer's site	65%	65%	70%	61%
Spoke with a car dealer before the purchase	54%	46%	50%	64%
Test drove a car or range of cars	44%	36%	43%	52%
Internet - car review sites or car club sites	42%	47%	43%	37%
Internet - Car sales sites	36%	43%	35%	30%
Asked a friend, relative or colleague for advice	26%	32%	27%	20%
Hard copy materials such as brochures/pamphlets	26%	18%	23%	34%
Directly looking at a car	18%	17%	15%	22%
Asked a mechanic or another professional in the car industry for advice	12%	14%	10%	13%
Internet - social media	10%	16%	12%	5%
Internet - car magazine	9%	10%	11%	7%
Hard copy car magazines	7%	9%	6%	7%
Internet, somewhere else	1%	1%	0%	2%
Other	2%	0%	2%	4%

Q 20: What were all the places where you looked for information to inform your purchase? Please select all that apply. (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,491)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Minor differences in information sources were also observed for metro vs. regional new car buyers. New car buyers in regional areas were more likely to rely on information from a car dealership (61% regional vs. 53% metropolitan). Hard copy materials were also a more common source of information for regionally-based new car buyers (32% vs. 24%).

Table 5: Sources of information by location

		Location	
	Total	Metro	Regional
n=	*1,489*	*1,141*	*348*
Internet - manufacturer's site	65%	65%	64%
Spoke with a car dealer before the purchase	54%	53%	61%
Test drove a car or range of cars	45%	44%	48%
Internet - car review sites or car club sites	42%	43%	40%
Internet - Car sales sites	36%	36%	34%
Asked a friend, relative or colleague for advice	26%	28%	21%
Hard copy materials such as brochures/pamphlets	26%	24%	32%
Directly looking at a car	18%	17%	21%
Asked a mechanic or another professional in the car industry for advice	12%	12%	12%
Internet - social media	10%	12%	6%
Internet - car magazine	9%	10%	8%
Hard copy car magazines	7%	8%	7%
Internet, somewhere else	1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	2%	3%

Q 20: What were all the places where you looked for information to inform your purchase? Please select all that apply. (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 and provided a valid postcode (n=1,489)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Sources of information used by new car buyers also differed by the frequency with which new car buyers purchased new cars. Frequent new car buyers (purchase 1-4 years) reported that they tended to rely less on car dealers (42% vs. 62% of first-time new car buyers) and test-driving (36% vs. 52% of infrequent car buyers). Instead, frequent new car buyers stated that they were more likely to use the internet including social media (18% vs. 8% of first-time new car buyers) and online car magazines (14% vs. 6%).

Table 6: Sources of information by frequency of car purchase

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,379*	*447*	*621*	*311*
Internet - manufacturer's site	66%	62%	69%	66%
Spoke with a car dealer before the purchase	55%	42%	61%	62%
Test drove a car or range of cars	45%	36%	52%	45%
Internet - car review sites or car club sites	43%	42%	44%	44%
Internet - Car sales sites	37%	40%	34%	37%
Asked a friend, relative or colleague for advice	27%	21%	26%	37%
Hard copy materials such as brochures/pamphlets	26%	26%	29%	23%
Directly looking at a car	18%	13%	21%	21%
Asked a mechanic or another professional in the car industry for advice	12%	14%	12%	12%
Internet - social media	11%	18%	7%	8%
Internet - car magazine	10%	14%	8%	6%
Hard copy car magazines	8%	11%	7%	5%
Internet, somewhere else	1%	1%	2%	0%
Other	2%	3%	2%	3%

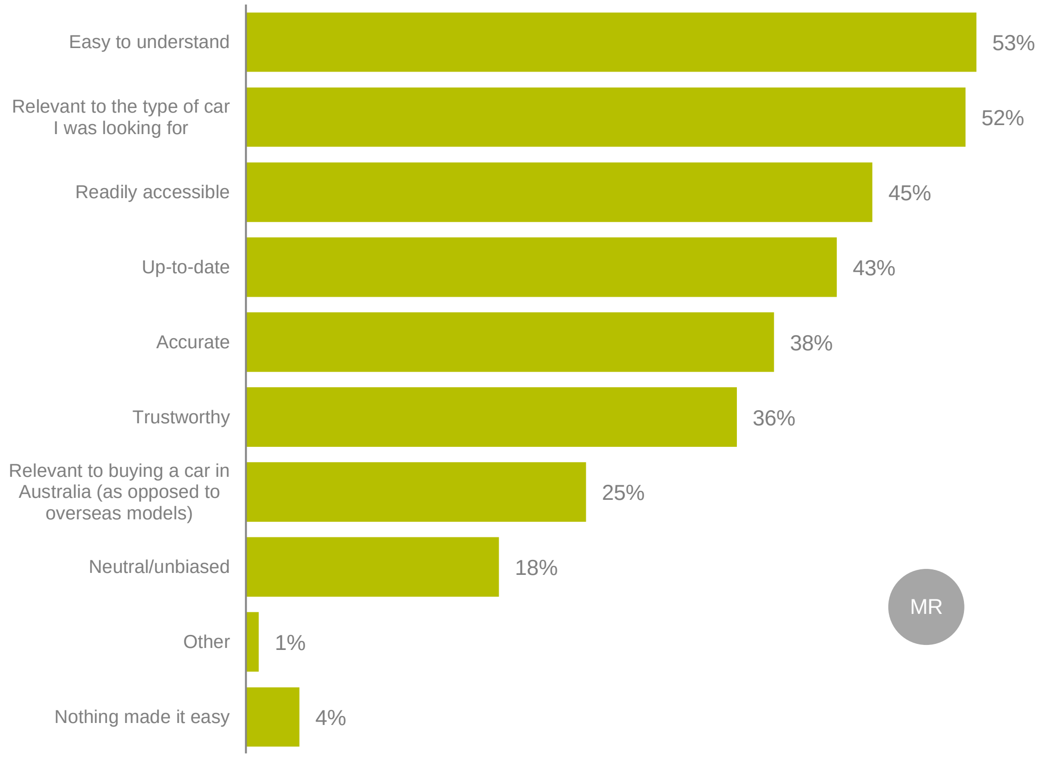
Q 20: What were all the places where you looked for information to inform your purchase? Please select all that apply. (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,379)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left)	Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

3.5. Factors that made decision-making easy

Half of new car buyers reported that the key attributes of information that made the decision-making process easy related to the ease of understanding and the relevance of the information (53% and 52% respectively). Two fifths also considered the information being readily accessible (45%) and up-to-date (43%) as factors that eased the decision-making process.

Figure 6: Factors that made decision-making easy



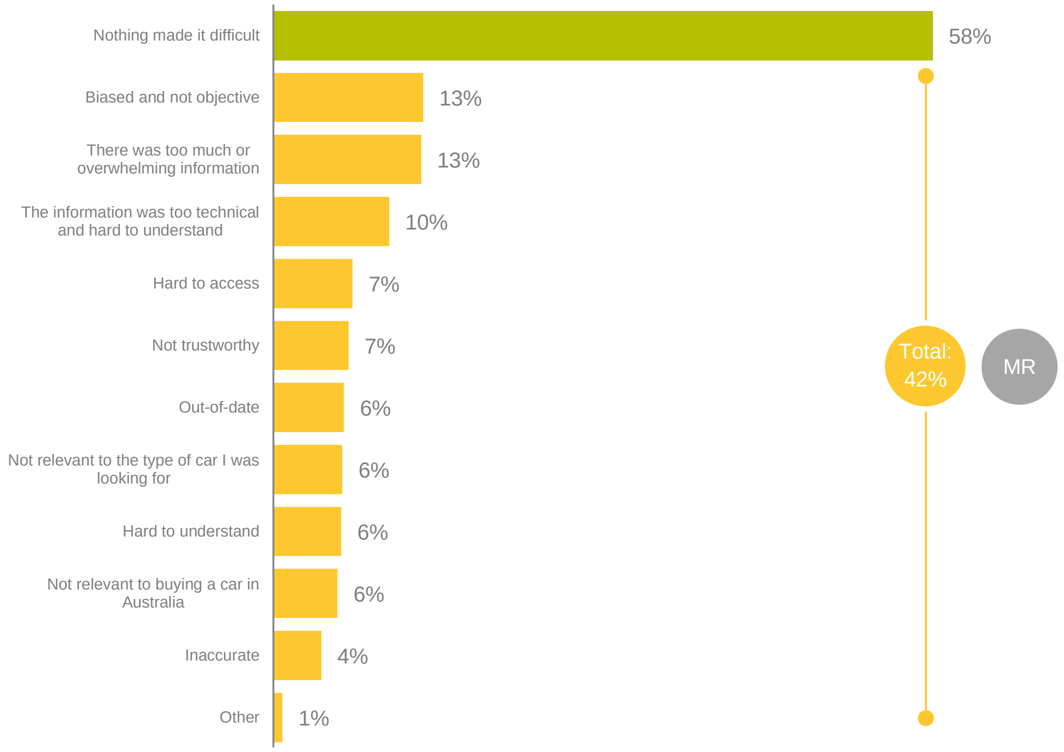
Q 22: What, if anything, made it easy to inform yourself about your new car purchase?
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,491)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Overall, most new car buyers reported similar perceptions of what made it easy to inform their purchase, with no major pattern of demographic differences observed.

3.6. Factors that made decision-making hard

Overall, four in ten new car buyers indicated that at least one factor made it hard to find reliable information to inform their purchase decision (42%). The most commonly reported factors that made an informed decision difficult were information being biased (13%), overwhelming in volume (13%), and being overly-technical (10%).

Figure 7: Factors that made decision-making hard



Q 23: What, if anything, made it difficult to inform yourself about your new car purchase?
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,491)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Unlike the factors that made the purchase decision *easy*, the factors that made the purchase decision *hard* did show several differences by a range of demographic factors.

Most notably, younger new car buyers (18-34 years) reported a far higher degree of difficulty in sourcing the required information vs. older new car buyers (50+ years). For instance, younger new car buyers expressed higher levels of difficulty obtaining information that was not:

- biased (19% vs. 9% of older new car buyers);
- overly technical and hard to understand (17% vs. 7%); and
- hard to access (13% vs. 4%).

Older new car buyers were, on the other hand, less likely to have encountered these types of difficulty.

Table 7: Factors that made decision-making hard by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,491*	*463*	*447*	*581*
Biased and not objective	13%	19%	13%	9%
There was too much or overwhelming information	13%	17%	13%	10%
The information was too technical and hard to understand	10%	17%	8%	7%
Hard to access	7%	13%	5%	4%
Not trustworthy	7%	10%	8%	4%
Out-of-date	6%	10%	6%	3%
Not relevant to the type of car I was looking for	6%	9%	5%	5%
Hard to understand	6%	11%	5%	3%
Not relevant to buying a car in Australia (as opposed to overseas models)	6%	9%	5%	4%
Inaccurate	4%	8%	3%	2%
Other	1%	0%	1%	1%

Q 23: What, if anything, made it difficult to inform yourself about your new car purchase? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,491)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Those who frequently bought new cars (purchase 1-4 years) also reported more difficulty in sourcing the information that they needed (noting that these new car buyers were also more likely to rely on hard-copy and online materials as opposed to in-person communication and test driving).

Frequent car buyers were more likely to report that 'nothing made it difficult' (46%) compared with first-time new car buyers (59%).

For example, frequent new car buyers were more likely to perceive that information about new cars was:

- biased and not objective (19% vs. 12% of first-time car buyers)
- not relevant to the type of car they are seeking (10% vs. 5%).

Table 8: Factors that made decision-making hard by frequency of car purchase

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,379*	*447*	*621*	*311*
Biased and not objective	14%	19%	11%	12%
There was too much or overwhelming information	13%	15%	12%	15%
The information was too technical and hard to understand	10%	13%	8%	10%
Hard to access	7%	10%	6%	7%
Not trustworthy	7%	8%	6%	6%
Not relevant to the type of car I was looking for	6%	10%	5%	5%
Out-of-date	6%	8%	6%	5%
Hard to understand	6%	10%	4%	6%
Not relevant to buying a car in Australia	6%	8%	4%	5%
Inaccurate	4%	7%	3%	2%
Other	1%	0%	1%	1%
Nothing made it difficult	57%	46%	65%	59%

Q 23: What, if anything, made it difficult to inform yourself about your new car purchase? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and selected at least one influencing factor at Q19 (n=1,379)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

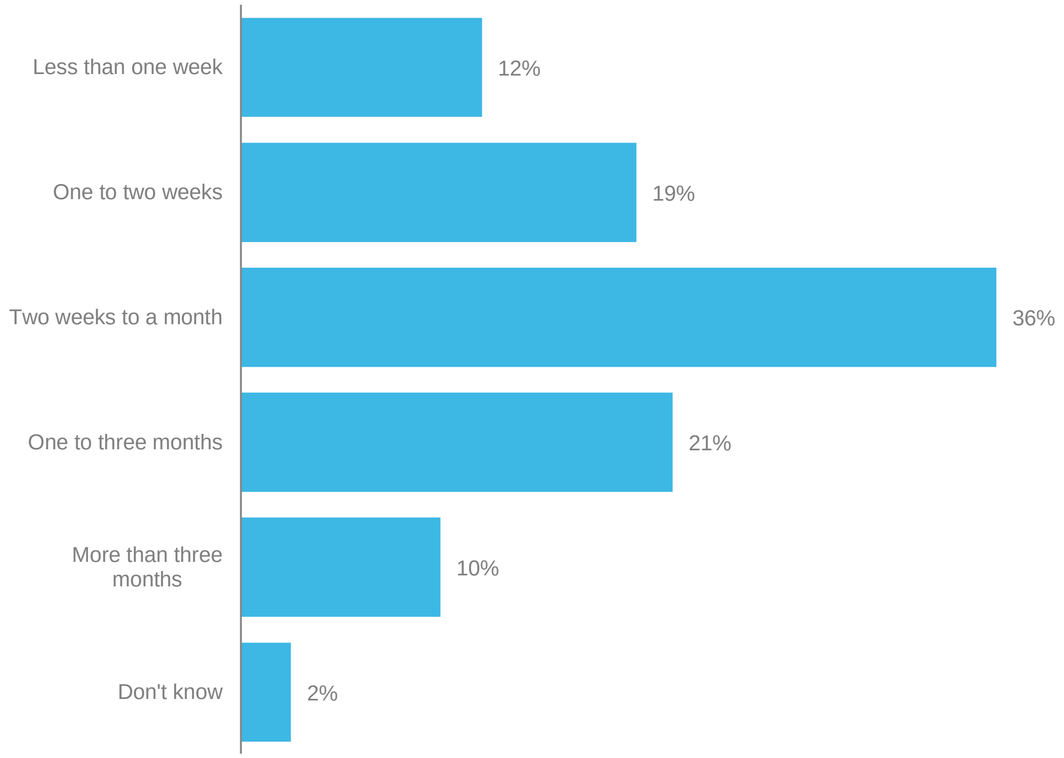
New car buyers who indicated that they had experienced an issue with a manufacturing defect post-sale tended to report greater difficulty in sourcing information to inform their purchase decision. For example, new car buyers who reported a manufacturing defect were more likely to feel that the information they obtained pre-sale was biased and hard to access.

3.7. Length of time researching car choice

New car buyers most commonly researched their choice of car for between two weeks and one month (36%). Three in ten buyers however spent over a month researching their car choice (21% one to three months, 10% more than three months).

No notable demographic differences were observed for the length of time spent researching the new car purchase.

Figure 8: Length of time researched car choice



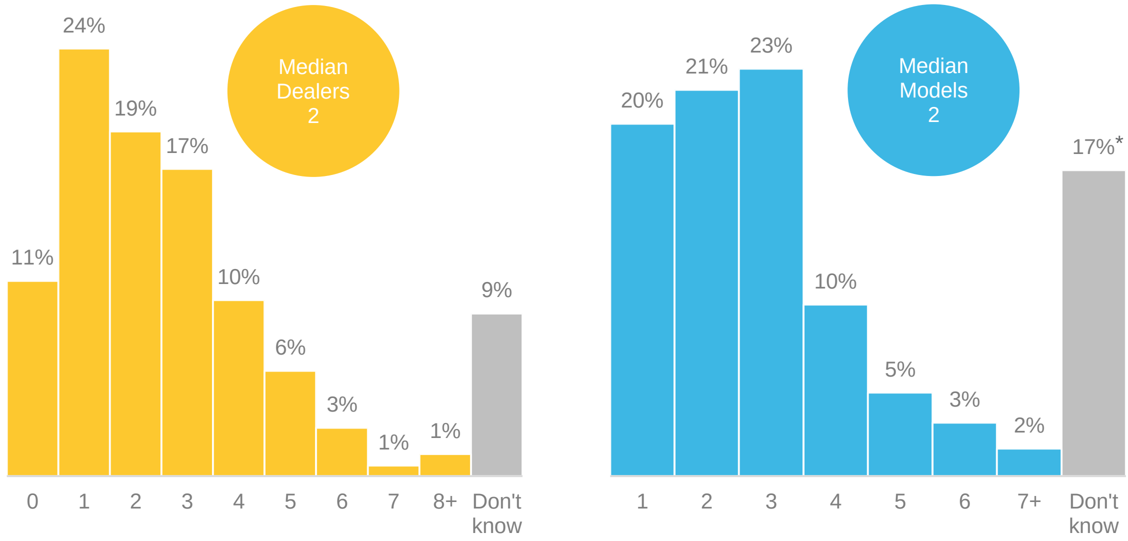
Q24. How long did you spend looking for information before you made a decision? I.e., from when you first started looking for information to when you purchased the car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

3.8. Number of dealers visited and models considered

New car buyers most commonly visited one to two dealerships before purchasing a new car. One to three models of car were typically considered.

The median number of dealers visited was 2, the median number of models considered is also 2.[13] No demographic differences exist for either dealers visited or models considered. (Median figures exclude 'don't know' and 'not applicable' responses.)

Figure 9: Number of dealerships visited and models considered



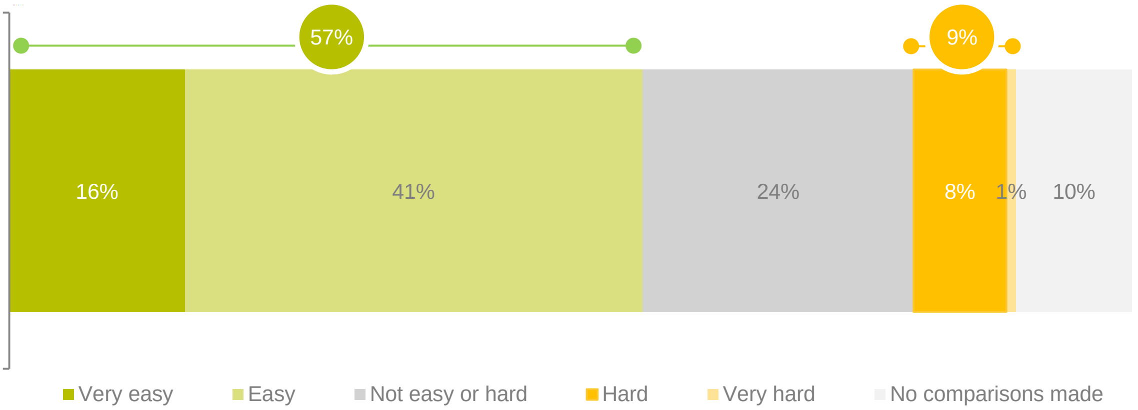
Q 25:	In total, how many different dealerships did you go to when you were looking at cars when you were deciding which car to buy?	Q26:	How many different brands of car did you consider when you were thinking about your most recent new car purchase?
Base:	All new car buyers (n=1,500)	Base:	All new car buyers (n=1,500)
		*	A small proportion of respondents answered 'zero' to this question (3%). It is unlikely that no models of car were considered before purchase. These respondents have been re-classified as 'don't know'.

13 The mean number of dealers visited is 2.7, while the mean number of models considered is also similar at 2.6.

3.9. Ease of making comparisons

More than half of new car buyers perceived that it was easy to compare between different brands of cars (57%). One in ten perceived that it was hard (9%). The remaining one in ten did not make any comparisons when choosing their new car (10%).

Figure 10: Ease of making comparisons



Q 27: Was making comparisons between different brands of cars…
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

The key demographic differences for this measure were seen for age and location:

- older new car buyers (50+ years) were less likely to describe comparison-making as ‘easy’ (36% vs. 46% of new car buyers aged 18-34 years); and
- similarly, new car buyers in regional areas were also less likely to describe comparisons as ‘easy’ than those living in metropolitan areas (34% vs. 43%).

Older new car buyers were also more likely to indicate that they had not made any comparisons at all compared to both younger and middle aged new car buyers (15% vs. 6% and 8% respectively).

Table 9: Ease of making comparisons by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Very easy	16%	16%	18%	14%
Easy	41%	46%	42%	36%
Not easy or hard	24%	24%	23%	26%
Hard	8%	8%	8%	8%
Very hard	1%	1%	1%	1%
Not applicable - no comparisons were made	10%	6%	8%	15%

Q 27: Was making comparisons between different brands of cars…(SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 10: Ease of making comparisons by location

		Location	
	Total	Metro	Regional
n=	*1,498*	*1149*	*349*
Very easy	16%	15%	16%
Easy	41%	43%	34%
Not easy or hard	24%	24%	26%
Hard	8%	8%	9%
Very hard	1%	1%	1%
Not applicable - no comparisons were made	10%	9%	13%

Q 27: Was making comparisons between different brands of cars…(SR)
Base: All new car buyers who provided a valid postcode (n=1,498)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

4. Experiences pre-sale: Type and quality of information

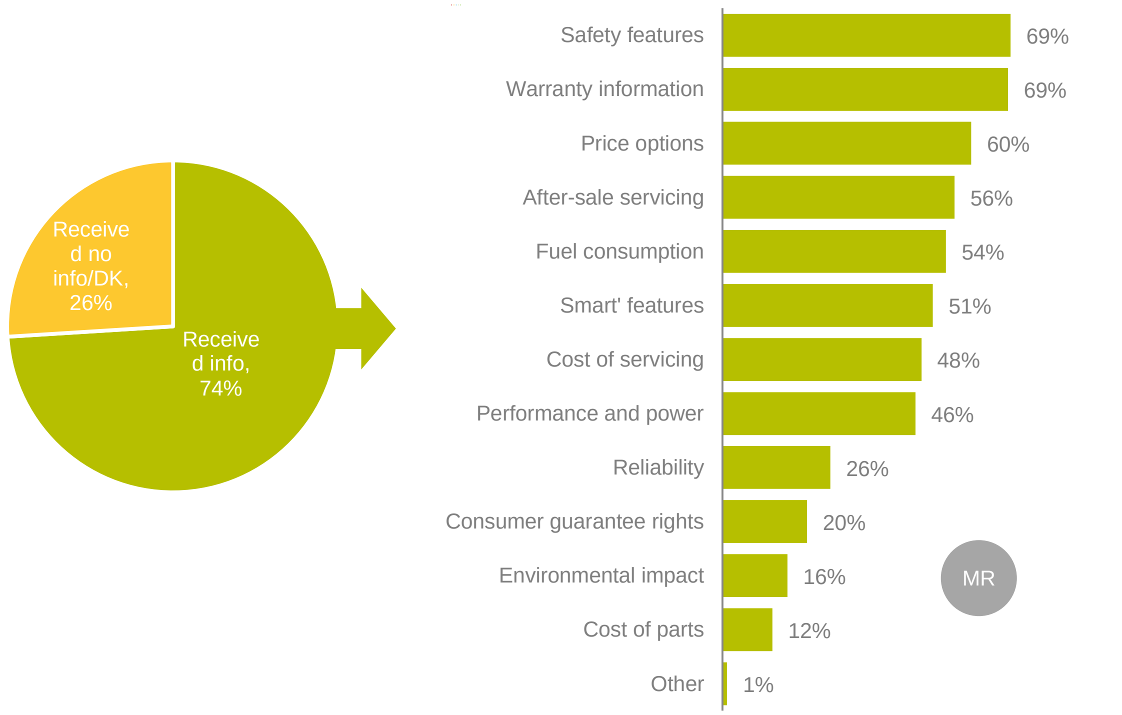
4.1. Received information from sales-person

Almost all new car buyers reported that they purchased their new car from a dealership (65% from a single-branded dealership, 32% from a multi-branded dealership).

Three-quarters of new car buyers reported that they received information from the sales-person before purchasing their car (74%)[14]. Of these, 69% stated they received information about safety features and warranty information. Up to three fifths also reported receiving information about price options and after-sale servicing (60% and 56% respectively).

Information about fuel economy was received by just over half of new car buyers (54%). Less than a fifth of these new car buyers reported that they received information about the environmental impact or the cost of parts related to their new cars (16% and 12% respectively).

Figure 11: Received information from the sales-person



Q 28: Did the sales-person who sold you the most recent new car give you any information before you bought the new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Q 29: What sort of information did they give you?
Base: New car buyers who received information from sales-person (n=1,111)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

[14] Please note that this finding is different from that presented on Page 14 regarding 'where information was sourced from'. Findings on Page 14 relate to all sources where new car buyers actively 'looked' for information pre-purchase. The findings on this page relate to a question that specifically asked if the sales-person provided information in the lead-up to the purchase.

Several demographic differences were observed for the proportions of new car buyers who received information from the sales-person. The following types of new car buyers reported to be slightly more likely to have received information from the sales-person:

- older new car buyers aged 50+ years (78% vs. 72% and 71% of younger and middle aged new car buyers respectively);
- new car buyers in regional areas (79% vs. 72% of new car buyers living in metropolitan areas); and
- infrequent new car buyers (purchase 5+ years) 79% vs. 68% of frequent new car buyers (1-4 years).

Table 11: Received information from sales-person by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Received information	74%	72%	71%	78%
Received no information	13%	16%	14%	9%
Don't know	13%	12%	15%	13%

Q 28: Did the sales-person who sold you the most recent new car give you any information before you bought the new car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 12: Received information from sales-person by location

		Location	
	Total	Metro	Regional
n=	*1,498*	*1149*	*349*
Received information	74%	72%	79%
Received no information	13%	14%	8%
Don't know	13%	14%	12%

Q 28: Did the sales-person who sold you the most recent new car give you any information before you bought the new car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who provided a valid postcode (n=1,498)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 13: Received information from sales-person by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Received information	75%	68%	79%	77%
Received no information	13%	20%	8%	11%
Don't know	12%	12%	12%	12%

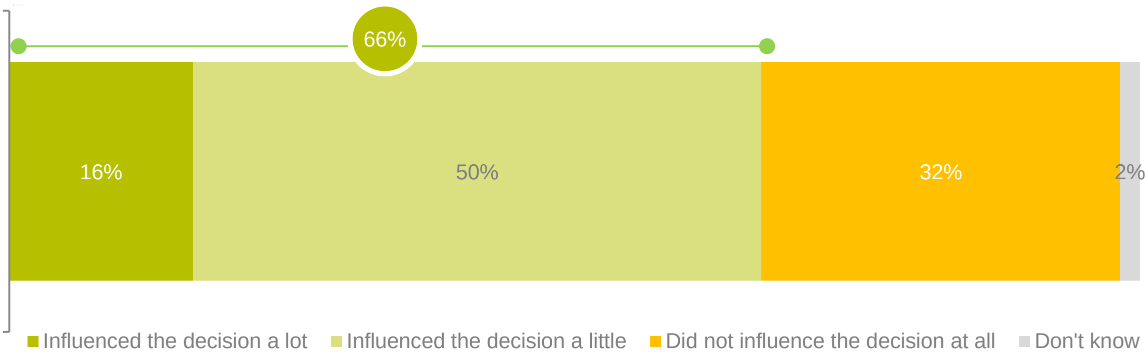
Q 28: Did the sales-person who sold you the most recent new car give you any information before you bought the new car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

4.2. Sales-person influence

Two thirds of new car buyers who received information from the sales-person felt that the information had some influence on their purchase decision (66%). Three in ten perceived that this information did not play a role in their decision (32%).

Figure 12: Sales-person influence



Q33: How much do you think the information the sales-person gave you influenced your final decision to choose the new car?
Base: All new car buyers who received information from sales-person (n=1,111)

The influence of the sales-person over decision-making varied by age and frequency of purchasing a new car:

- a greater proportion of younger new car buyers (18-34 years) perceived that the sales-person had influenced their decision 'a lot' (21% vs. 12% of new car buyers aged over 50 years); and
- similarly, more frequent new car buyers (purchase 1-4 years) also perceived that the sales-person had influenced their decision 'a lot' (27% vs. 11% and 14% of infrequent and first-time car buyers respectively).

Table 14: Sales-person influence by age

	Total	Age: 18-34 (younger)	Age: 35-49 (mid age)	Age: 50+ (older)
n=	*1,111*	*339*	*318*	*454*
Influenced the decision a lot	16%	21%	17%	12%
Influenced the decision a little	50%	58%	50%	45%
Did not influence the decision at all	32%	19%	30%	42%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%	1%

Q33: How much do you think the information the sales-person gave you influenced your final decision to choose the new car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who received information from sales-person (n=1,111)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 15: Sales-person influence by purchase frequency

	Total	Frequency of purchase*: 1-4 years (frequent)	Frequency of purchase*: 5+ years (infrequent)	Frequency of purchase*: First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,041*	*306*	*495*	*240*
Influenced the decision a lot	16%	27%	11%	14%
Influenced the decision a little	51%	47%	53%	53%
Did not influence the decision at all	31%	24%	35%	32%
Don't know	2%	2%	1%	2%

Q33: How much do you think the information the sales-person gave you influenced your final decision to choose the new car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and received information from sales-person (n=1,041)

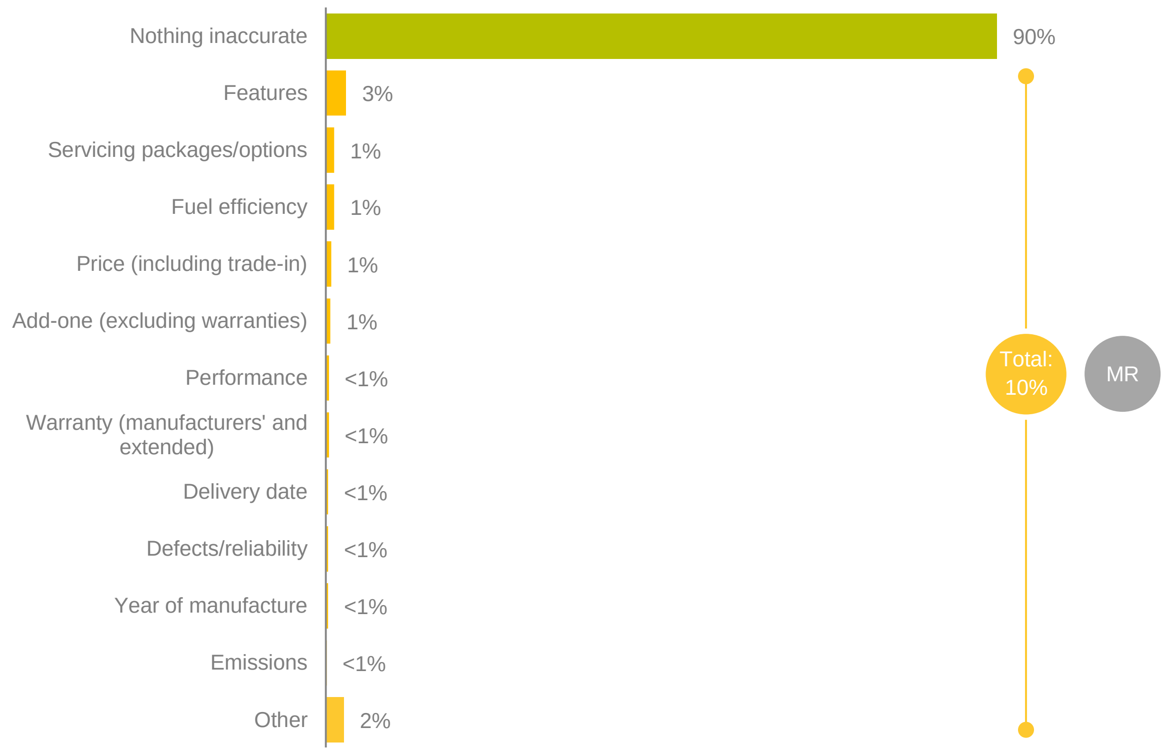
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

4.3. Inaccurate information from the sales-person

Most new car buyers that received any information from the sales-person felt that this information was accurate (90%).

Overall, 10% of new car buyers who received information from the sales-person felt that it was inaccurate. A lack of expected features was most commonly (though infrequently) identified at 3%. Other forms of inaccurate information related to servicing packages, fuel consumption and price, each at 1% or lower.

Figure 13: Prevalence of inaccurate information from sales-person

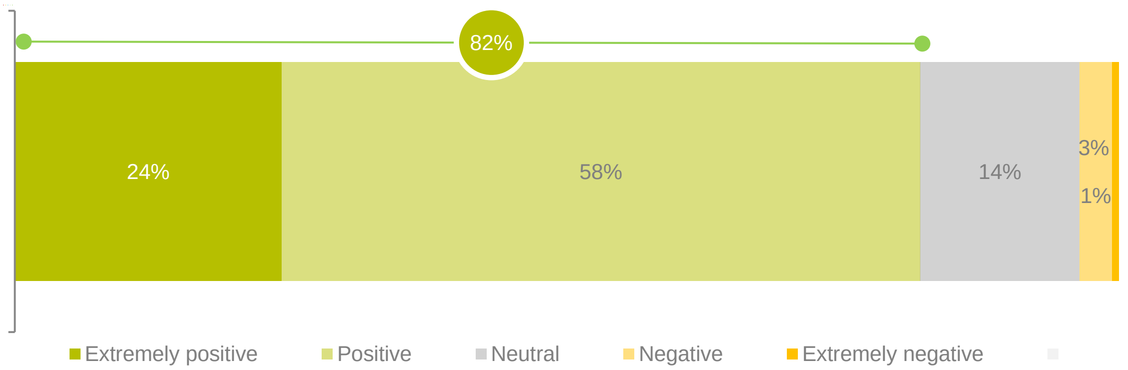


Q34: Was there anything that the sales-person told you that turned out to be inaccurate?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

4.4. Overall experience

Overall, eight in ten new car buyers who purchased their car from a dealership had a positive experience (82%), one quarter of which had an extremely positive experience (24%). Less than one in twenty report having a negative experience (4% total extremely/negative).

Figure 14: Overall experience



Q 35: Overall, would you say that your experience of purchasing a new car was …
Base: All new car buyers, excluding pilot participants (n=1,473)[15]

The overall quality of the new car purchase experience was correlated with age. Older new car buyers (50+ years) were more likely to report an 'extremely positive' experience (30%) than both younger (18-34 years) and middle aged drivers (35-49 years) - 17% and 24% respectively.

Those who reported an issue with a manufacturing defect post-sale were also less likely to report an 'extremely positive' experience compared with those who did not have an issue (16% vs. 25%).

No other significant differences were observed between groups, including differences between those who purchase new cars more or less frequently.

[15] The structure of the questionnaire was changed slightly after the pilot to include all respondents at Q35.

Table 16: Overall experience by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,473*	*460*	*441*	*572*
Extremely positive	24%	17%	24%	30%
Positive	58%	61%	58%	56%
Neutral	14%	18%	14%	12%
Negative	3%	3%	4%	2%
Extremely negative	1%	1%	1%	1%

Q 35: Overall, would you say that your experience of purchasing a new car was … (SR)
Base: All new car buyers, excluding pilot participants (n=1,473)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 17: Overall experience by presence of manufacturing issue

		Presence of manufacturing issue	
	Total	Had manufacturing issue	No manufacturing issue
n=	*1,473*	*198*	*1275*
Extremely positive	24%	16%	25%
Positive	58%	53%	59%
Neutral	14%	22%	13%
Negative	3%	7%	2%
Extremely negative	1%	2%	0%

Q 35: Overall, would you say that your experience of purchasing a new car was … (SR)
Base: All new car buyers, excluding pilot participants (n=1,473)

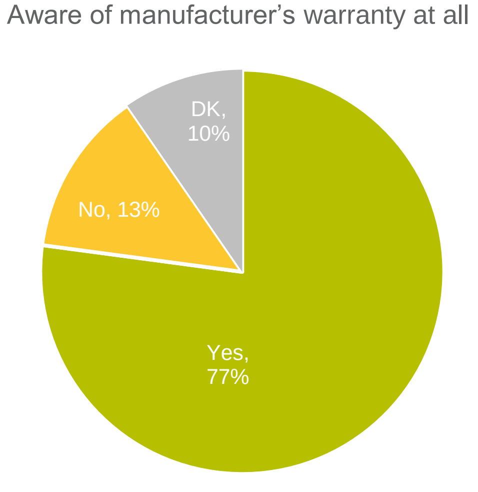
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

5. Experiences pre-sale: Purchase and understanding of warranties

5.1. Knowledge of manufacturer’s warranty

Three quarters of new car buyers reported they were aware of the manufacturer’s warranty when they purchased their new car (77%), while one in eight new car buyers were unaware (13%).

Figure 15: Aware of manufacturer’s warranty overall



Q36: Did you know about the manufacturer’s warranty at the time you bought the car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

New car buyers’ knowledge of the manufacturer’s warranty varied by several factors, including state of residence, household income and age.

Overall, 77% of all new car buyers knew about the manufacturer’s warranty. In contrast:

- knowledge was higher in south Australia and Tasmania (84% and 89%), though lower in new south wales (72%);
- those from higher income households ($125k+) were more likely to know about the manufacturer’s warranty (82%) than those who have medium ($80k-$125k) or low incomes ($0-$80k)[16] - 75% and 76% respectively; and
- older new car buyers (50+ years) were also more likely to know about the manufacturer’s warranty (84%) than both middle aged (35-49 years) and young new car buyers (18-34 years) 79% and 65% respectively.

[16] Income brackets were determined by the composition of the sample. The sample was split into three approximately equal subsamples based on income – i.e., approximately one third of the sample is represented in each of these three brackets.

Table 18: Knowledge of manufacturer's warranty by state

	Location								
	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
n=	*1,500*	*450*	*375*	*300*	*120*	*120*	*75*	*30*	*30*
Yes	77%	72%	73%	81%	76%	84%	89%	93%	86%
No	13%	18%	15%	11%	9%	7%	4%	4%	11%
Do not remember	10%	9%	11%	8%	14%	9%	7%	3%	3%

Q36: Did you know about the manufacturer's warranty at the time you bought the car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 19: Knowledge of manufacturer's warranty by household income

	Level of household income			
	Total	\$0-\$80k (low income)	\$80k-\$125k (medium income)	\$125k+ (high income)
n=	*1,328*	*503*	*436*	*389*
Yes	77%	76%	75%	82%
No	14%	14%	17%	10%
Do not remember	9%	10%	9%	8%

Q36: Did you know about the manufacturer's warranty at the time you bought the car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who provided their household income (n=1,328)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 20: Knowledge of manufacturer's warranty by age

	Age			
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Yes	77%	65%	79%	84%
No	13%	22%	12%	7%
Do not remember	10%	12%	9%	8%

Q36: Did you know about the manufacturer's warranty at the time you bought the car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

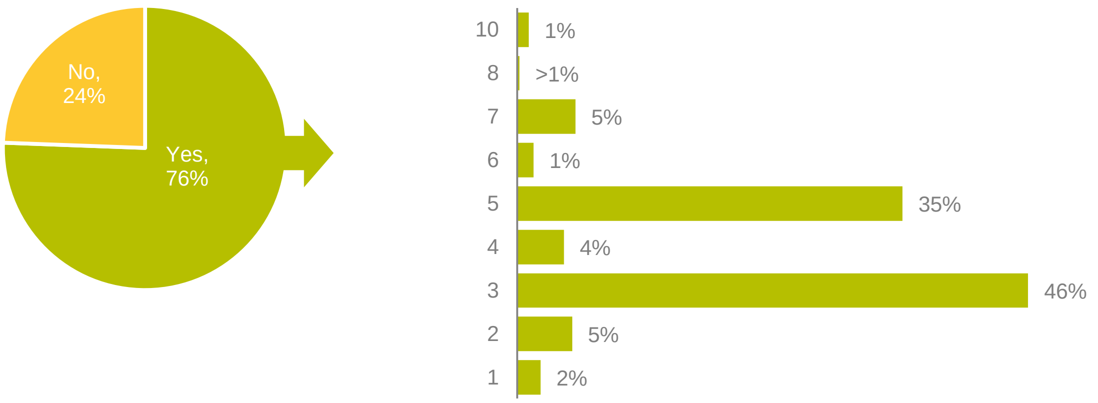
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Among new car buyers who were aware of the manufacturer's warranty, three quarters could recall the number of years the warranty covered (76%). The most common perception was that their manufacturer's warranty covered their car for either five or three years (35% and 46% respectively).

Only one quarter reported that they knew the number of kilometres (kms) covered by the manufacturer's warranty (27%). The most common perception was that their manufacturer's warranty covered their car for between 51,000 and 100,000 km (66%).

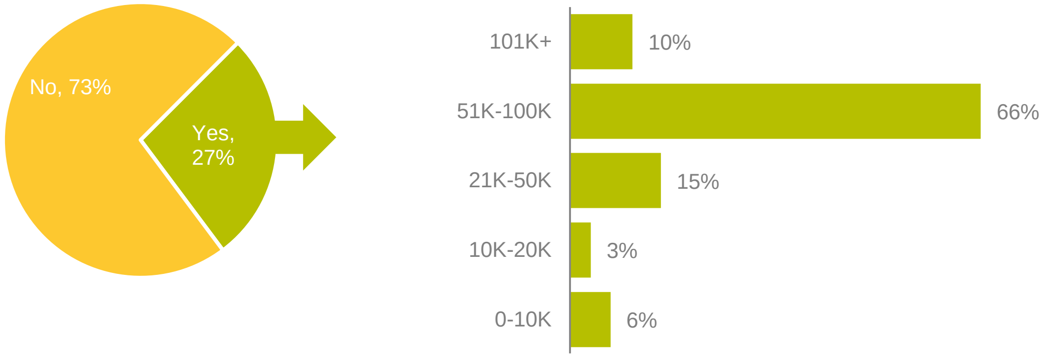
No notable demographic differences were observed for the reported number of years or kilometres covered by the manufacturer's warranty.

Figure 16: Stated manufacturer's warranty – years*



Q 37: Do you know how long the manufacturer's warranty was for your most recent new car? This may have been listed in years, number of kilometres driven or both.
Base: Aware of manufacturer's warranty at all (n=1,154) Base: Stated manufacturer's warranty in years (n=865)

Figure 17: Stated manufacturer's warranty – kilometres*



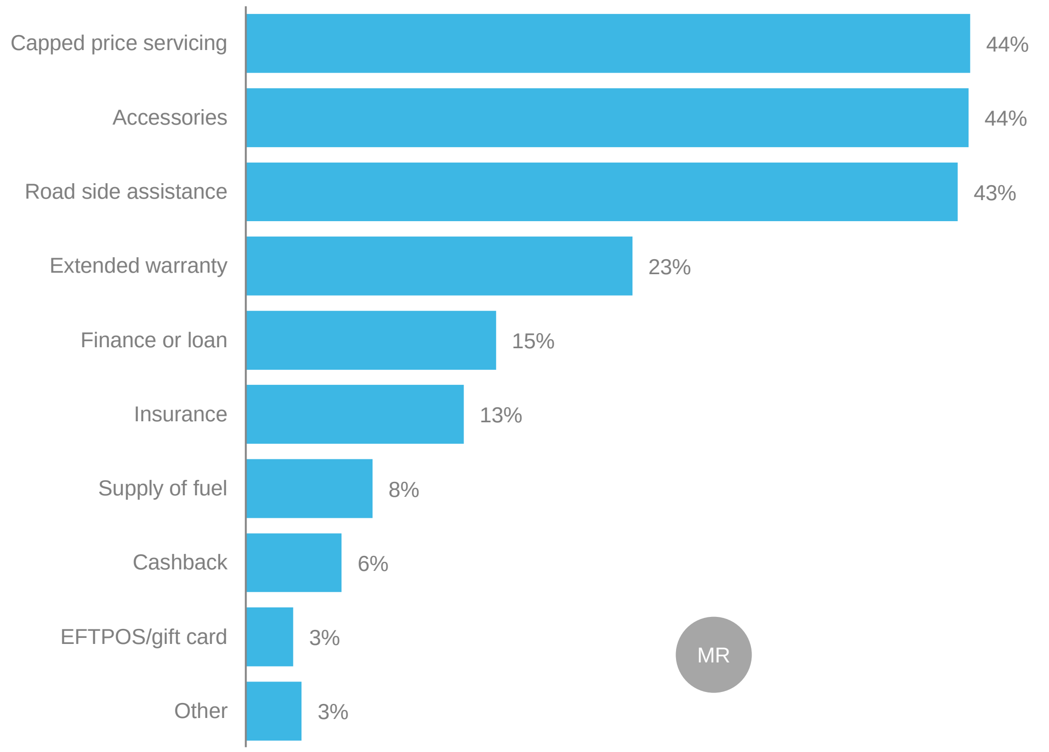
Q 37: Do you know how long the manufacturer's warranty was for your most recent new car? This may have been listed in years, number of kilometres driven or both.
Base: Aware of manufacturer's warranty at all (n=1,154) Base: Stated manufacturer's warranty in kilometres (n=302)
* Please note that new car buyers in the survey could specify their knowledge of the manufacturer's warranty in both years, and/or kilometres

5.2. After-sales products included or purchased

Over two fifths of new car buyers reported that they received capped price servicing, accessories or roadside assistance when purchasing their new car (44%, 44% and 43% respectively). One in five new car buyers reported that extended warranties were purchased or offered to them (23%).

New car buyers reported that they were less likely to have received fuel supplies, cashbacks or gift card products (8%, 6% and 3% respectively).

Figure 18: After-sales products included or purchased



Q 38: What other products were included or purchased with your new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Age played a large determining role in the types of products purchased or provided with the new car. Older new car buyers (50+ years) were more likely to have purchased (or received) a range of add-ons including capped price servicing (50% vs. 38% and 42%); accessories (52% vs. 38% and 38%) and road side assistance (50% vs. 39% and 37%) of both younger and middle aged new car buyers respectively.

Younger new car buyers (18-34 years), on the other hand, showed a greater propensity towards finance- or cash-based add-ons, including:

- a loan (25% vs. 14% of middle aged and 8% of older new car buyers);
- insurance (22% vs. 10% and 8%); and
- fuel vouchers (11% vs. 6% and 6%).

Table 21: After-sales products included or purchased by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Capped price servicing	44%	38%	42%	50%
Accessories	44%	38%	38%	52%
Road side assistance	43%	39%	37%	50%
Extended warranty	23%	25%	24%	21%
Finance or loan	15%	25%	14%	8%
Insurance	13%	22%	10%	8%
Supply of fuel vouchers	8%	11%	6%	6%
Cashback	6%	11%	4%	3%
EFTPOS/gift card	3%	6%	2%	1%
Other	3%	0%	4%	5%
None of these	14%	12%	19%	12%

Q 38: What other products were included or purchased with your new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

The frequency with which new car buyers purchased new cars also plays a role in the types of add-ons that were sought or obtained. Compared with infrequent new car buyers (purchase 5+ years), first-time new car buyers were more likely to have purchased or been given road side assistance (50% vs. 43%) or financing (22% vs. 10%)

Like younger new car buyers, frequent purchasers (purchase 1-4 years) were more likely to have received finance/monetary extras such as insurance (17% vs. 9% of infrequent new car buyers); cashback (10% vs. 3%) and EFTPOS/gift cards (7% vs. 1%) than infrequent car buyers. Frequent new car buyers were less inclined to buy capped price servicing and accessories.

Compared with frequent car buyers, infrequent new car buyers were less likely to receive or purchase a range of add-ons including extended warranties (20% vs. 28%); loans/financing (10% vs. 18%) and insurance (9% vs 17%).

Table 22: After-sales products included or purchased by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Road side assistance	43%	40%	43%	50%
Capped price servicing	43%	34%	48%	48%
Accessories	43%	36%	46%	49%
Extended warranty	24%	28%	20%	25%
Finance or loan	16%	18%	10%	22%
Insurance	13%	17%	9%	16%
Supply of fuel vouchers	8%	10%	6%	8%
Cashback	6%	10%	3%	6%
EFTPOS/gift card	3%	7%	1%	1%
Other	3%	3%	4%	2%
None of these	14%	16%	15%	8%

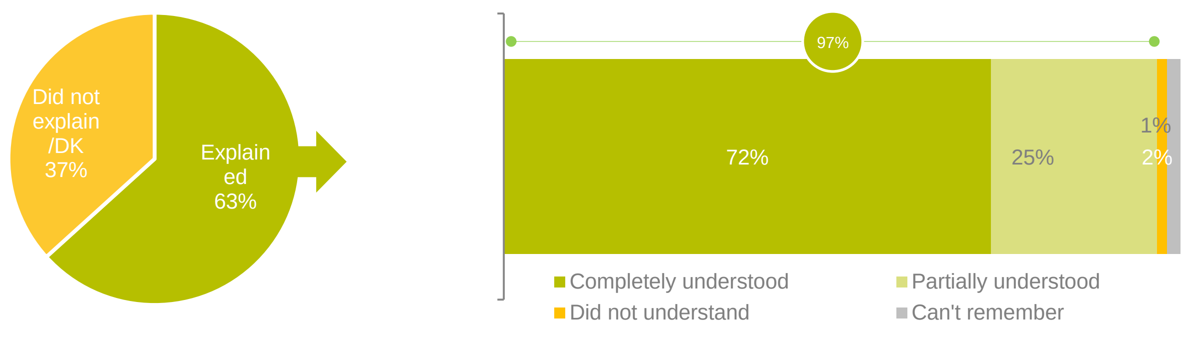
Q 38: What other products were included or purchased with your new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

5.3. Extended vs. manufacturer's warranties

Six in ten new car buyers who purchased an extended warranty reported that they were told the difference between the extended and manufacturer's warranties (63%). Almost all of these new car buyers who received an explanation felt that they at least partially understood it (97%).

Figure 19: Extended vs. manufacturer's warranties



Q 39: Did the sales-person explain the difference between an extended warranty and the manufacturer's warranty?
Base: New car buyers who purchased extended warranty (n=347)

Q 40: Did the sales-person explain the difference between an extended warranty and the manufacturer's warranty in a way you could understand?
Base: New car buyers who purchased extended warranty and received explanation (n=219)

First-time new car buyers reported that they were less likely to 'completely' understand the differences between extended and manufacturer's warranties (52%) compared with 85% of infrequent new car buyers or frequent car buyers (68%).

Table 23: Understanding warranties by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*209*	*85*	*77*	*47*
Completely understood	71%	68%	85%	52%
Partially understood	26%	28%	14%	40%
Did not understand	2%	1%	0%	4%
Can't remember	2%	2%	1%	4%

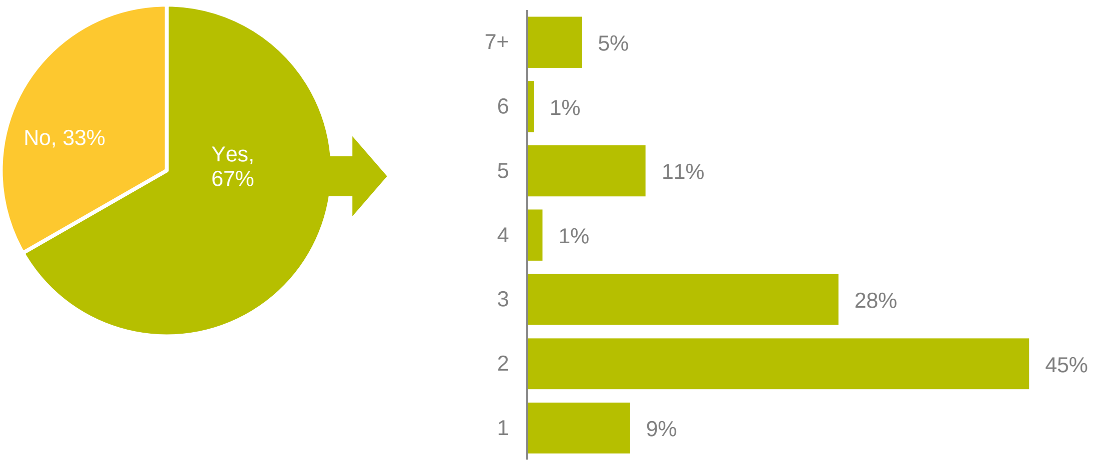
Q 40: Did the sales-person explain the difference between an extended warranty and the manufacturer's warranty in a way you could understand? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and whose sales-person explained their warranties (n=209)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Two thirds of new car buyers who reported that they received an explanation of the extended warranty stated that they understood the number of additional years that were covered (67%). These new car buyers most commonly perceived that the extended warranty covered an additional two or three years (45% and 28% respectively). Only one fifth of these new car buyers stated that they understood the number of additional kilometres that were covered (21%). A very wide range of kilometres were stated with no clear consensus on what was covered.

No notable demographic differences were observed for the reported number of years or kilometres covered by the extended warranty.

Figure 20: Stated extended warranty – years*

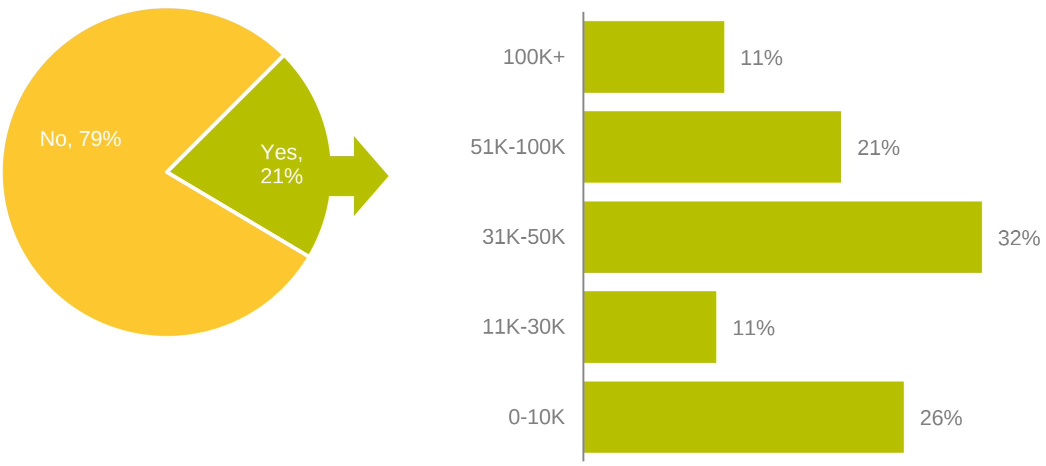


Q 41: Do you know how long the dealer's extended warranty was for your most recent new car? This may have been listed in years, number of kilometres driven or both.

Base: All new car buyers provided with an explanation of extended warranty (n=219)

Base: New car buyers able to state extended warranty in years (n=146)

Figure 21: Stated extended warranty – kilometres*



Q 41: Do you know how long the dealer's extended warranty was for your most recent new car? This may have been listed in years, number of kilometres driven or both.

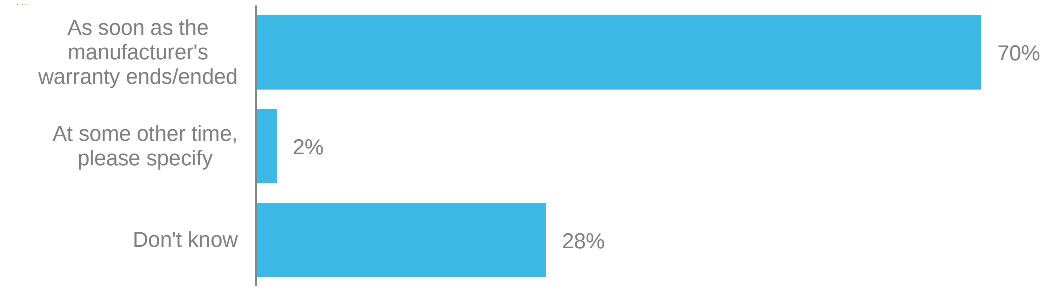
Base: All new car buyers provided with an explanation of extended warranty (n=219)

Base: New car buyer able to state extended warranty in kilometres (n=45)

The majority of new car buyers who purchased an extended warranty perceived that their extended warranty commenced as soon as the manufacturer's warranty ended (70%). Three in ten indicated that they did not know when their extended warranty commenced (28%).

No notable demographic differences were observed for this type of understanding of the extended vs. manufacturer's warranty.

Figure 22: Commencement of extended warranty



Q42: Do you know when the extended warranty commenced, or when it is due to commence?
Base: New car buyers who purchased extended warranty (n=347)

6. Fuel consumption, emissions and performance

This section addresses a key objective of the survey relating to the preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and car performance of a new car buyer's new car.

Findings have been collated into a single chapter on emissions and performance from elsewhere in this report. In relation to fuel consumption, a more detailed set of measures is presented that contrasted expected fuel consumption pre-sale; and perceptions of actual fuel consumption post-sale.

6.1. Fuel consumption

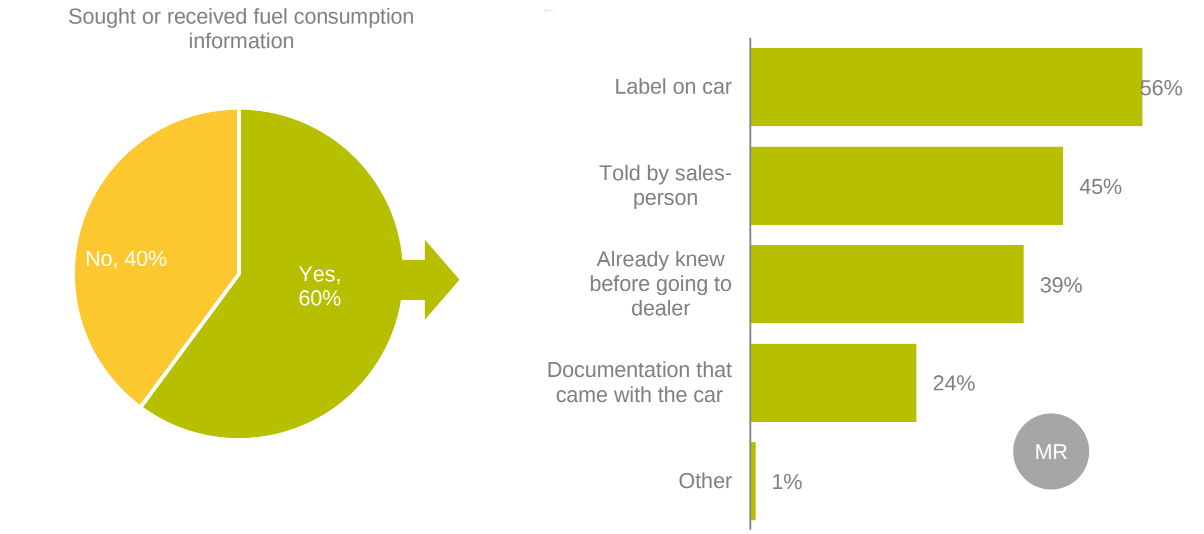
Fuel consumption as an influencing factor

Nearly six in ten new car buyers stated that fuel consumption influenced their choice of new car (57%). This is the third most common influencing factor in the study. (Detailed information about influencing factors is presented on Page 6).

Seeking information about fuel consumption, emissions and performance pre-sale

Six in ten new car buyers actively sought information about fuel consumption or were given information about fuel consumption (60%). Most looked for this information on the label on the car (56%) or were told about fuel consumption by the sales-person (45%).

Figure 23: Sought fuel consumption information



Q 30: Did you specifically look for or receive any information about fuel consumption?
Base: New car buyers who sought/received information (n=1,111)

Q 31: How did you find out about the fuel consumption of the new car?
Base: New car buyers who received information about fuel consumption (n=667)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Fuel consumption information was generally of greater interest to new car buyers in regional areas and buyers who frequently bought new cars (purchase 1-4 years). Almost seven in ten regional new car buyers sought fuel consumption information vs. closer to six in ten of metropolitan new car buyers (67% vs. 58%). The same finding was apparent for frequent new car buyers compared to first-time buyers (67% vs. 53%).

No notable demographic differences were observed for the places in which new car buyers looked for fuel consumption information.

Table 24: Sought fuel consumption information by location

		Location	
	Total	Metro	Regional
n=	*1,109*	*833*	*276*
Yes	60%	58%	67%
No	28%	30%	22%
Can't remember	12%	12%	11%

Q30: Did you specifically look for or receive any information about fuel consumption? (SR)
Base: Al new car buyers who sought/received information and provided a valid postcode (n=1,109)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 25: Sought fuel consumption information by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,041*	*306*	*495*	*240*
Yes	60%	67%	60%	53%
No	28%	24%	28%	34%
Can't remember	11%	8%	12%	13%

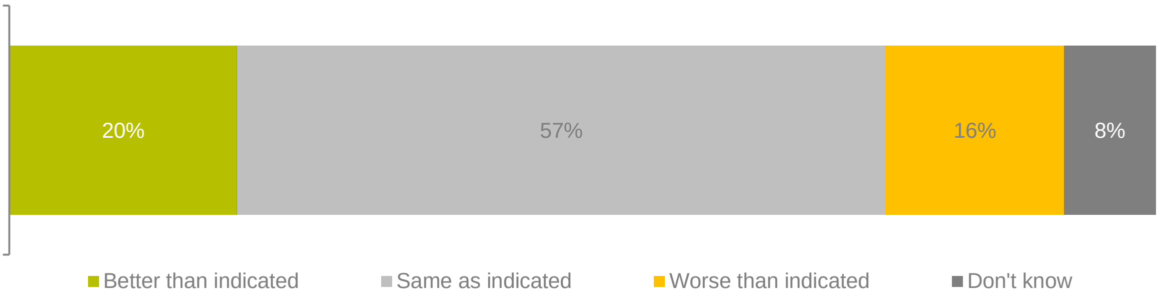
Q30: Did you specifically look for or receive any information about fuel consumption? (SR)
Base: New car buyers who sought/received information and could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,041)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Perceptions of the accuracy of fuel consumption information post sale

Most new car buyers who received information about fuel consumption believed that their car's fuel consumption was the same as indicated in the information they were given (57%)[17]. However, one in six perceived that the fuel consumption of their new car was worse than indicated (16%)[18].

Figure 24: Accuracy of information about fuel consumption



Q 32: Do you think your most recent new car …
Base: New car buyers who received information about fuel consumption (n=667)

Overall, less than one in ten new car buyers stated that they experienced an issue with lower-than-expected fuel consumption (7%)[19]. Lower-than-expected fuel consumption was reported to be less of an issue for smaller cars such as hatchbacks compared with larger cars such as SUVs (4% compared with 8%). See Page 55 for further details about perceived issues with new cars.

17 Please note that equivalent questions of this type about emissions and performance were not included in the survey. The focus here was on fuel consumption only.

18 Please note that this question is different to findings relating to accuracy of fuel consumption provided specifically by the sales-person that are shown on Page 30.

19 These findings relate to all new car buyers as opposed to the population of new car buyers who received information about fuel consumption that is reported in Figure 24.

Perceptions of whether their new car had better or worse fuel consumption than indicated by information they received varied by frequent vs. infrequent new car purchasers. Frequent new car purchasers (purchase 1-4 years) who sought fuel consumption information more often felt that their car got better fuel consumption than indicated in comparison to either infrequent (purchase 5 years) or first-time new car buyers (29% vs. 14% and 18% respectively).

Table 26: Accuracy of fuel consumption information by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*628*	*205*	*295*	*128*
Better fuel consumption than indicated	20%	29%	14%	18%
The same fuel consumption as indicated	57%	53%	58%	60%
Worse fuel consumption than indicated	15%	15%	18%	10%
Don't know	8%	2%	10%	12%

Q 32: Do you think your most recent new car … (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and received information about fuel consumption (n=628)
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

6.2. Emissions

One in five new car buyers cited 'environmental impact' (which included car emissions, energy efficiency and other matters[20]) as a factor that influenced their choice of new car (18%). Detailed information about influencing factors is presented on Page 6.

These new car buyers indicated that information on environmental impact was amongst the hardest to find. One in seven new car buyers who sought information about environmental impacts expressed difficulties sourcing the information they needed (15%). This information was the third most difficult to find after vehicle reliability and the cost of parts. (see Page 12 for further details on difficulties sourcing this type of information).

6.3. Performance

Four in ten new car buyers indicated that car performance was a factor that influenced their choice of car (39%). However, price and vehicle type were far stronger influencing factors (74% and 68% respectively). Again, detailed information about influencing factors is presented on Page 6.

New car buyers perceived that information about performance was relatively easy to find. Only one in ten found it difficult to find this type of information (8%). Information about the cost of parts and reliability were reported to be far more difficult to find (28% and 16% respectively). See Page 12 for further details on this question.

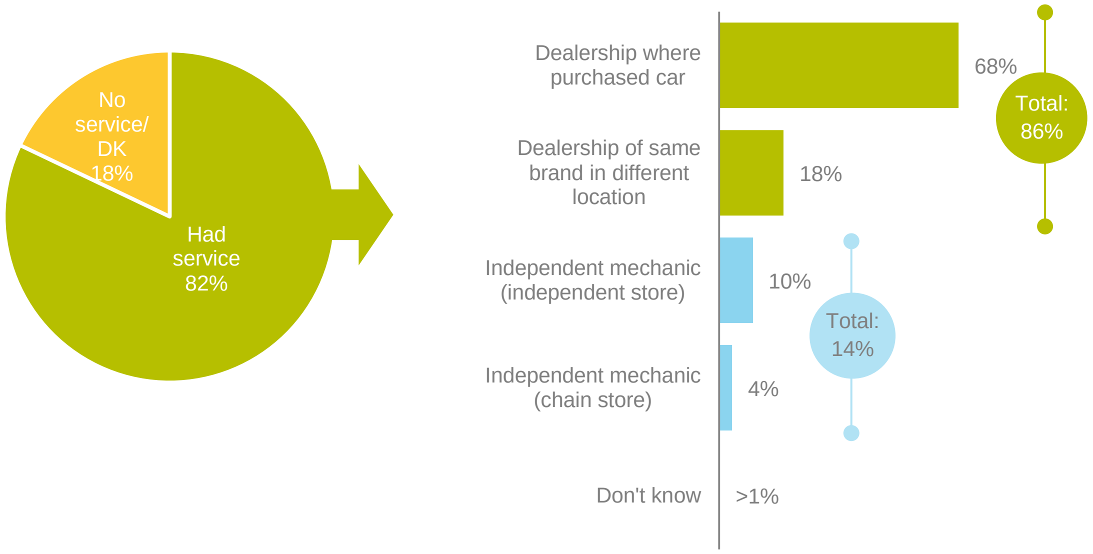
[20] Questions about emissions were phrased in terms of 'environmental impact' in the questionnaire.

7. Experiences post-sale: Servicing

7.1. Car servicing choices

Eight in ten new car buyers reported that they had a routine service for their new car (82%), most commonly at a dealership (86%). Just over one in ten new car buyers who had taken their car for a service opted for independent servicing (14%).

Figure 25: Car servicing choices



Q 58: Have you had a routine service or maintenance for the new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Q 59: Where did you last have your car serviced?
Base: New car buyers who had had a routine service/maintenance (n=1,236)

This pattern of response was not related to the age of the car. Around nine in ten new car buyers stated that they chose dealership servicing regardless of the year the car was purchased.

Infrequent new car buyers (purchase every 5 years+) reported that they were more likely to have had their car serviced than frequent cars buyers (purchase every 1-4years) - 86% vs. 75%. Conversely, frequent new car buyers were less likely to have had their new car serviced (75%), when compared to both infrequent buyers (86%) and first-time buyers (83%).

Older new car buyers (50+ years) were also more likely to have their car serviced (90%) than both middle-aged buyers (35-49 years) and younger car buyers (18-34 years) – 82% and 72% respectively.

Older cars that were purchased between 2012 and 2014 were also more frequently reported to have had a routine service (92% compared with 72% of those purchased after 2015).

Table 27: Prevalence of car servicing by purchase frequency

	Total	Frequency of purchase* 1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Yes	82%	75%	86%	83%
No	16%	21%	12%	15%
Don't know	3%	4%	2%	2%

Q 58: Have you had a routine service or maintenance for the new car?
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 28: Prevalence of car servicing by age

	Total	Age 18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Yes	82%	72%	82%	90%
No	15%	22%	16%	10%
Don't know	3%	6%	2%	0%

Q 58: Have you had a routine service or maintenance for the new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 29: Prevalence of car servicing by year of purchase

	Total	Year of purchase 2015 - 2016	2012 - 2014
n=	*1,500*	*748*	*752*
Yes	82%	72%	92%
No	15%	25%	6%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%

Q 58: Have you had a routine service or maintenance for the new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Younger new car buyers (18-34 years) were less likely to report having their car serviced at the dealership where the car was purchased (59%) compared with both middle aged new car buyers (35-49 years, 71%) and older new car buyers (50+ years, 72%).

Males were more likely than their female counterparts to report having their car serviced at the same dealership where they purchased the car (73% compared with 64%).

Table 30: Service location by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,236*	*344*	*367*	*525*
The dealership where you purchased the car	68%	59%	71%	72%
Another dealership - same brand, different location	18%	23%	17%	16%
An independent mechanic - small business	10%	14%	9%	8%
An independent mechanic - chain	4%	4%	4%	4%

Q 59: Where did you last have your car serviced? (SR)
Base: New car buyers who had had a routine service/maintenance (1,236)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

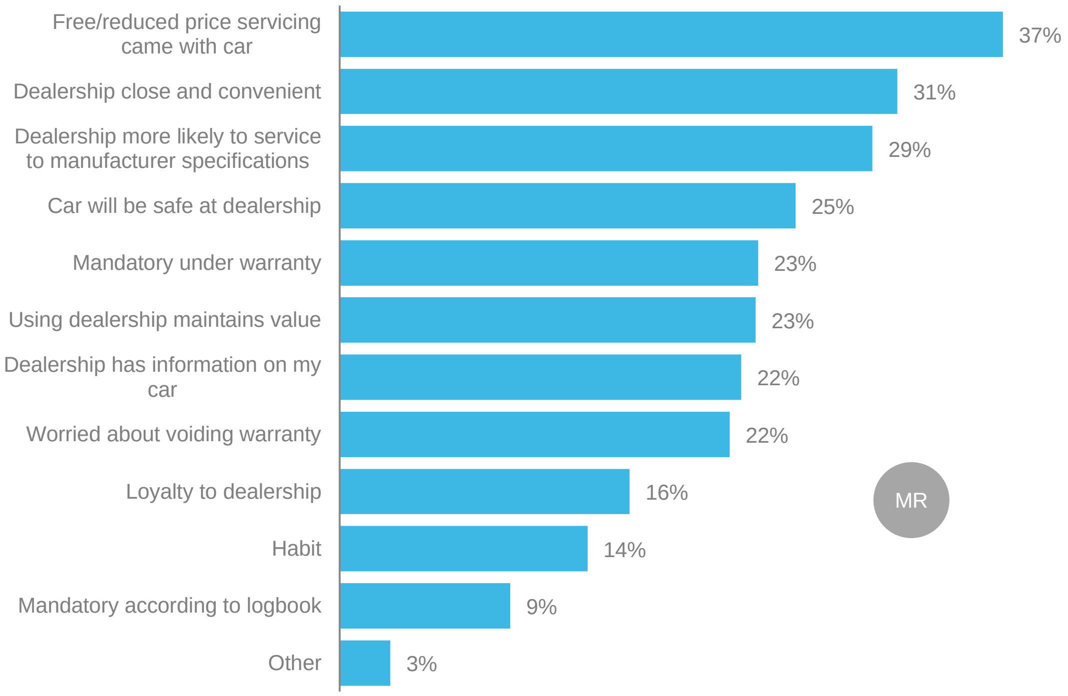
7.2. Dealership servicing

Reasons for choosing dealership servicing

Nearly two fifths of new car buyers stated that they most commonly had their car serviced at a dealership to take advantage of the free/reduced price servicing included with their purchase (37%).

A perception that servicing is mandatory under the warranty and concern over voiding the warranty was reported to be a reason for choosing dealership servicing for 23% and 22% of new car buyers respectively.

Figure 26: Reasons for choosing dealership servicing



Q 60: Why did you choose a dealership for servicing rather than an independent mechanic or a place like Kmart Auto?
Base: All new car buyers who had their car serviced at a dealership (n=1,067)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Older new car buyers (50+ years) indicated that they were more likely to choose dealership servicing because the dealership is close and convenient (37%) compared with both younger (18-34 years, 23%) and middle aged (35-49 years, 29%) new car buyers. Older car buyers were also more likely than younger and middle aged car buyers to believe the dealership would be more likely to service their car to the manufacturer's specifications (37% vs. 21% and 26% respectively).

Table 31: Reasons for choosing dealership servicing by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,067*	*281*	*322*	*464*
Free/reduced-price or capped price servicing came with car	37%	37%	30%	41%
Dealership close and convenient	31%	23%	29%	37%
Dealership is more likely to service the car to manufacturer's specifications	29%	21%	26%	37%
Car will be safe at dealership	25%	26%	24%	25%
Mandatory under warranty	23%	24%	23%	23%
Using a dealership maintains value	23%	21%	20%	26%
Dealership has information on my car	22%	18%	17%	28%
Worried about voiding warranty	22%	25%	22%	19%
Loyal to dealership	16%	14%	17%	17%
Habit	14%	16%	12%	14%
Mandatory according to logbook	9%	11%	7%	10%
Other	3%	1%	3%	4%

Q 60: Why did you choose a dealership for servicing rather than an independent mechanic or a place like Kmart Auto? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who had their car serviced at a dealership (n=1,067)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Frequent purchasers of new cars (purchase 1-4 years) were more likely to report returning to the dealership for servicing out of loyalty (22%), especially when compared to first-time car buyers (11%). They were, however, less likely to report returning due to financial benefits such as free or reduced price servicing (28%) compared with both infrequent buyers (5+ years, 41%) and first-time buyers (40%). They also indicated that they were less concerned about voiding the warranty when compared with first-time buyers (17% vs. 28%).

Table 32: Reasons for choosing dealership servicing by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*986*	*299*	*466*	*221*
Free/reduced-price or capped price servicing	37%	28%	41%	40%
Dealership close and convenient	31%	29%	36%	23%
Dealership is more likely to service the car to manufacturer's specifications	30%	33%	31%	25%
Car will be safe at dealership	25%	26%	23%	29%
Mandatory under warranty	24%	21%	25%	26%
Using a dealership maintains value	23%	27%	23%	18%
Dealership has information on my car	22%	25%	20%	23%
Worried about voiding warranty	22%	17%	22%	28%
Loyal to dealership	16%	22%	15%	11%
Habit	14%	15%	14%	13%
Mandatory according to logbook	10%	11%	8%	12%
Other	3%	2%	3%	4%

Q 60: Why did you choose a dealership for servicing rather than an independent mechanic or a place like Kmart Auto? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who had their car serviced at a dealership and could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=986)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

7.3. Independent servicing

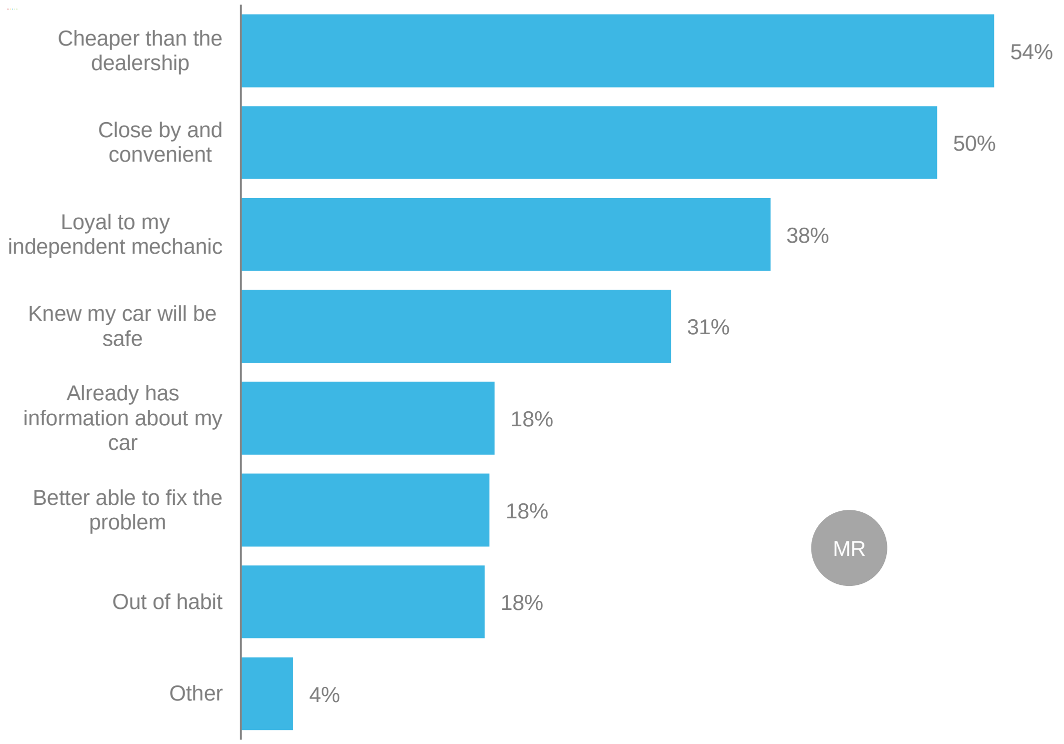
Reasons for choosing independent servicing

As stated on Page 46, 14% of new car buyers who had taken their car for a service reported that they opted for independent servicing rather than dealership servicing.

Half of new car buyers who had their vehicle serviced independently indicated that they did so due to cost (54%) or convenience (50%). Two fifths also stated they were loyal to their independent mechanic (38%).

No significant differences were observed by demography or car type for this series of measures about servicing at independent mechanics. As was the case for independent repairs, the small base size for this subpopulation of new car buyers limits the ability to make comparisons across groups. This limitation applies for the remaining measures in this section.

Figure 27: Reasons for choosing independent servicing

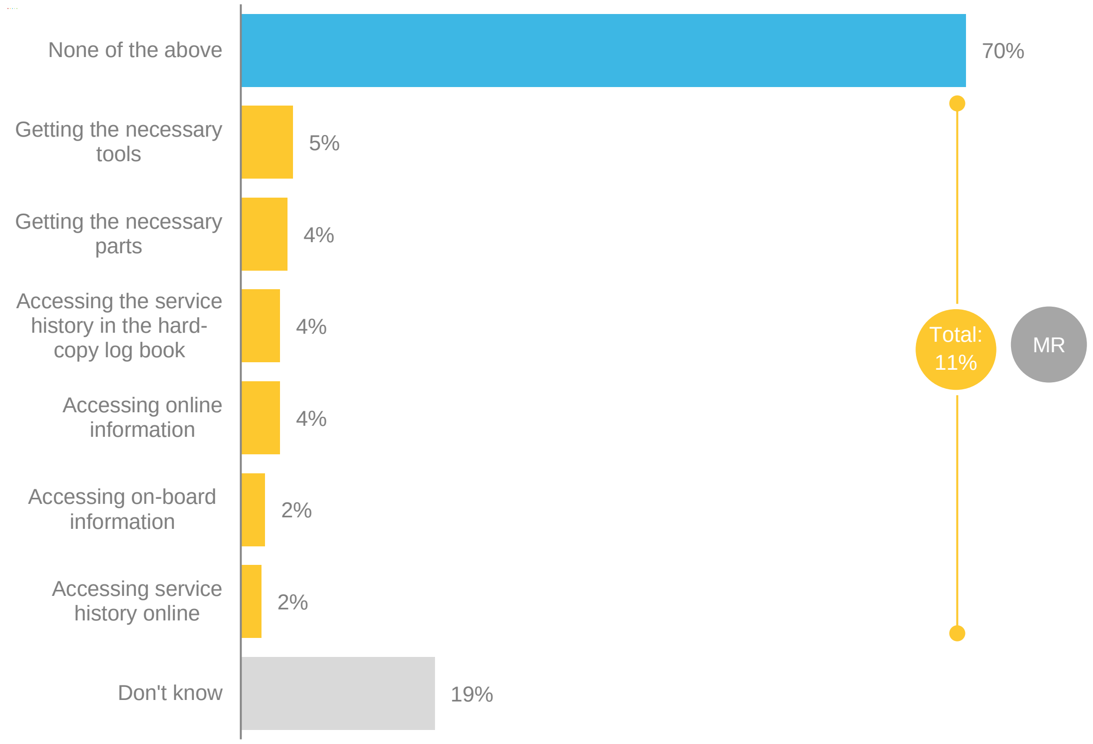


Q 61: Why did you choose an independent mechanic rather than a dealership for servicing your most recent new car?
Base: All new car buyers who had servicing at independent mechanic (n=167)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Independent mechanic servicing issues

Only one in ten new car buyers who opted for servicing at an independent mechanic reported that their mechanic encountered any issues in servicing the car (11%). Issues with the mechanic's access to necessary tools or parts were the most commonly reported problems (5% and 4% respectively).

Figure 28: Independent mechanic servicing issues



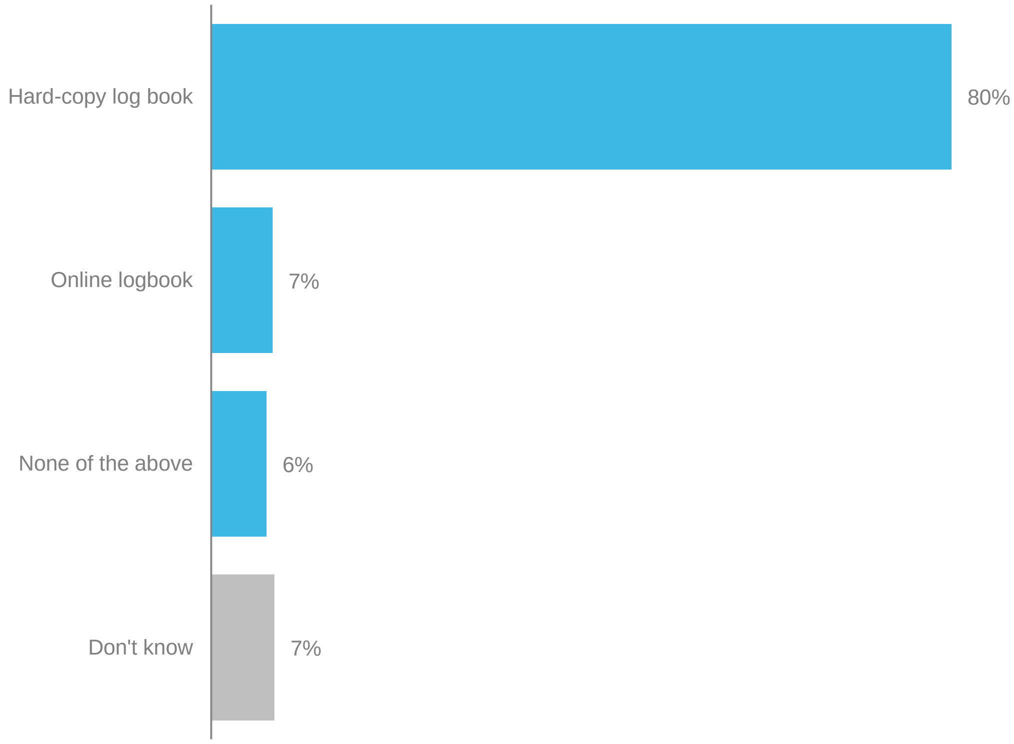
Q62: Do you know if the mechanic who serviced your car have any of the following problems when they were fixing your new car? Did they have difficulty with …?
Base: All new car buyers who had servicing at independent mechanic (n=167)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

7.4. Types of log book

When a new car is purchased, manufacturers generally provide a logbook, which includes information about the car, such as manufacturer specifications regarding servicing, and provides a record of the service history of the car.

Four fifths of new car buyers reported that they received a hard-copy logbook with their new car (80%). Online logbooks were relatively rare, received by less than one in ten new car buyers (7%).

Figure 29: Types of log book



Q 57: Did any of the following types of logbook come with the car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

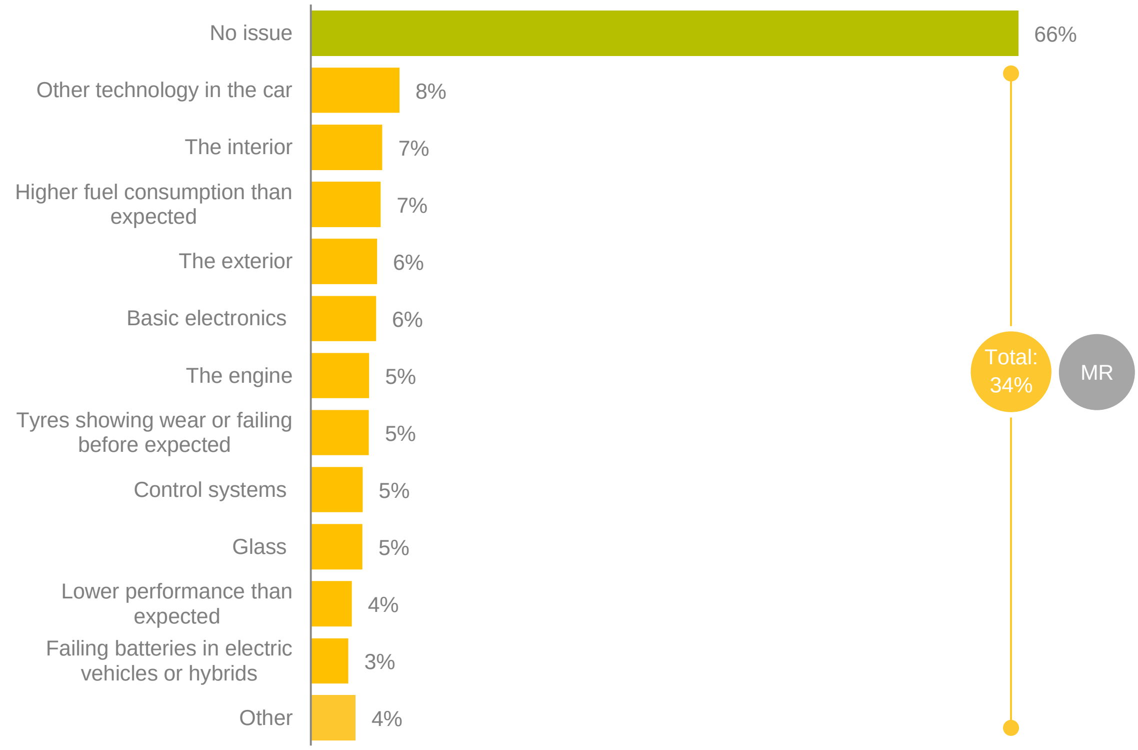
8. Experiences post-sale: Repairs

8.1. Prevalence and nature of issues with new cars

One-third of new car buyers reported that they had issue/s with their new car (34%). The most commonly reported issues related to the technology in the car (8%); issues with the interior such as upholstery; and unexpectedly high fuel consumption (7% each).

Issues with lower than expected performance and failing electronics were less commonly reported (4% and 3% respectively).

Figure 30: Prevalence and nature of issues with new cars



Q43: Did you experience any problems with the following aspects of your most recent new car? (Yes/no)
Base All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

New car buyers of higher-end cars ($35k+) reported having had slightly more issues with their car than buyers of lower-end new cars ($10k-$24k). Most notably, a greater proportion of buyers of higher-end new cars perceived issues with high fuel consumption (9% vs. 4% of lower-end new cars); wear on tyres (8% vs. 3%) and failing batteries (6% vs. 1%).

Table 33: Nature of issues with new cars by car value

		Car Value*		
	Total	$10K-$24K (lower end)	$25K-$35K (mid-range)	$35K+ (higher-end)
n=	*1,334*	*428*	*396*	*510*
Other technology	8%	5%	10%	9%
The interior such as upholstery and fittings	7%	5%	5%	9%
Significantly higher fuel consumption than expected	6%	4%	5%	9%
The exterior such as the paint/finish	6%	4%	6%	7%
Basic electronics	6%	3%	5%	8%
Tyres showing wear or failing before expected	5%	3%	5%	8%
The engine	5%	4%	6%	6%
Glass such as the windshield and windows	5%	3%	4%	7%
Control systems	5%	5%	3%	5%
Significantly lower performance than expected	4%	3%	3%	5%
Failing batteries in electric vehicles or hybrids	4%	1%	3%	6%
Other	4%	5%	4%	3%
None of these	67%	73%	67%	62%

Q43: Did you experience any problems with the following aspects of your most recent new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall the value of their car (n=1,334)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Purchasers of smaller cars (such as hatchbacks) were also significantly more likely to report having no issues (72%), compared with those who purchased medium sized (62%), large sized (66%) or other car types (55%).

Table 34: Nature of issues with new cars by car type

		Car type			
	Total	Small (hatchback)	Medium (sedan / station wagon)	Large (SUV / 4x4)	Other (Ute / van)
n=	*1,500*	*497*	*495*	*442*	*66*
Other technology	8%	7%	9%	9%	7%
The interior such as upholstery and fittings	7%	6%	9%	5%	3%
Significantly higher fuel consumption than expected	7%	4%	7%	8%	7%
The exterior such as the paint/finish	6%	4%	7%	7%	10%
Basic electronics	6%	3%	9%	5%	11%
The engine	5%	4%	7%	4%	7%
Tyres showing wear or failing before expected	5%	3%	6%	7%	11%
Control systems	5%	4%	7%	4%	5%
Glass such as the windshield and windows	5%	3%	7%	4%	7%
Significantly lower performance than expected	4%	3%	6%	3%	6%
Failing batteries in electric vehicles or hybrids	3%	1%	4%	5%	5%
Other	4%	5%	2%	4%	10%
None of the above	66%	72%	62%	66%	55%

Q43: Did you experience any problems with the following aspects of your most recent new car? (MR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

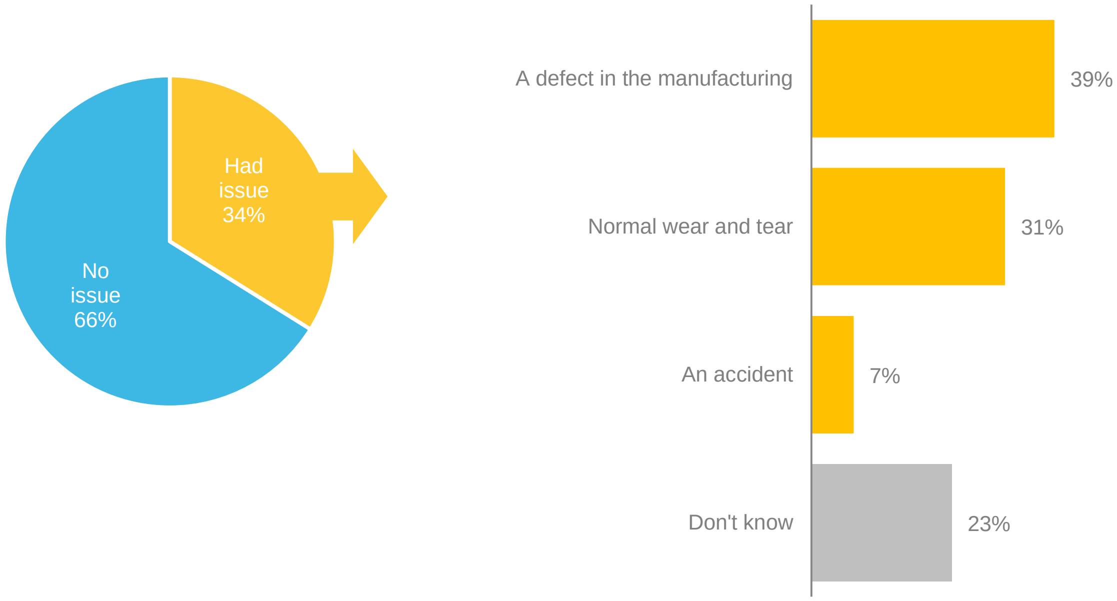
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Cause of issues with new car

A third of new car buyers reported having issues with their new car (34%). The majority however reported having no issue with their new car (66%).

Four in ten new car buyers who had an issue with their new car reported that the problem was caused by a defect in the vehicle's manufacturing (39%). Three in ten reported that the issue was due to normal wear and tear (31%) and the remainder stated that the issue was caused by an accident (7%). Almost one quarter did not know the cause of the issue (23%)

Figure 31: Cause of issues with new car



Q43: Did you experience any problems with the following aspects of your most recent new car?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Q44: To the best of your knowledge, what caused the most recent problem with the car?
Base: All new car buyers who experienced an issue with their new car (n=504)

Reported issues due to a manufacturing defect were more common for older cars (purchased between 2012 and 2014). Overall, four in ten new car buyers who had an issue reported that the problem was due to a manufacturing defect (39%).

In contrast buyers of newer cars (purchased 2015-2016) were less likely to indicate that the problem was due to a manufacturing defect (30%); whereas buyers of older cars (purchased 2012-2014) were more likely to report that the issue was due to a manufacturing defect (48%).

Table 35: Cause of issues with new cars by year of purchase

		Year of purchase	
	Total	2015-2016 (newer)	2012-2014 (older)
n=	*504*	*249*	*255*
A defect in the manufacturing	39%	30%	48%
Normal wear and tear	31%	38%	25%
An accident, including a crash or minor accidents such as a scrape in the car park	7%	8%	6%
Don't know	23%	24%	21%

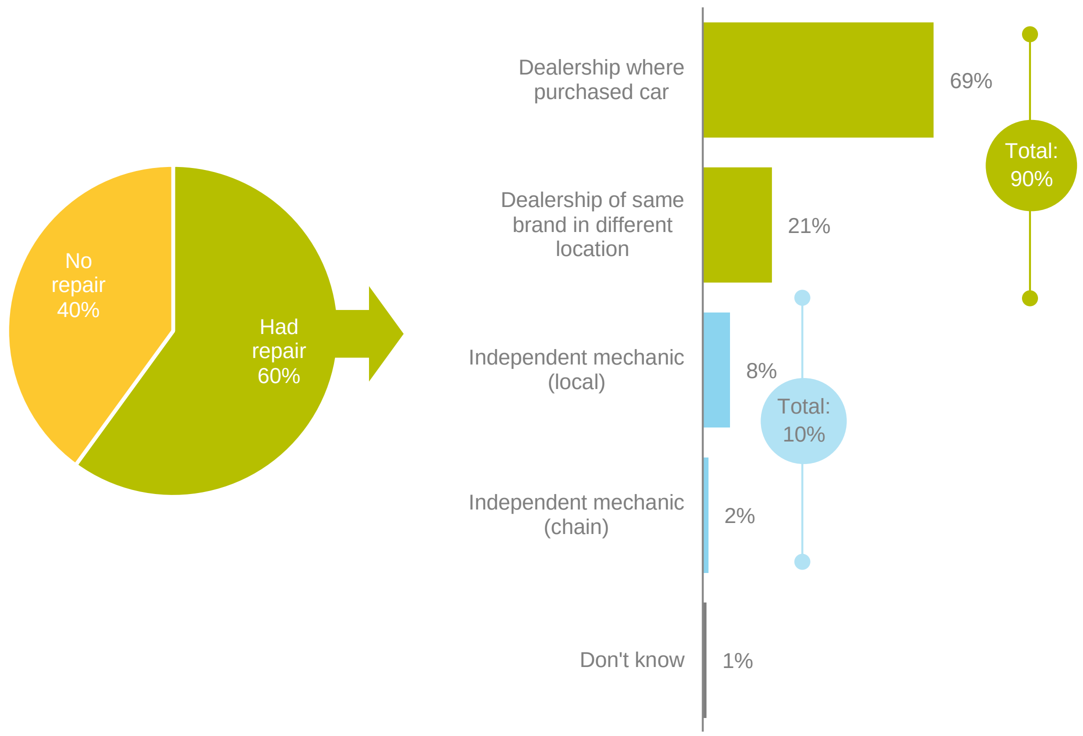
Q44: To the best of your knowledge, what caused the most recent problem with the car? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who experienced an issue with their new car (n=504)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

8.2. Type of mechanic used

Three fifths of new car buyers who had an issue with their new car took it to a mechanic for repairs (60%). Almost all had it repaired at the dealership where they purchased their car or another dealership selling the same make of car (90%). The remaining 10% used an independent mechanic.

Figure 32: Type of mechanic used



Q 45: Did you take the car in for repair for this most recent problem?
Base: All new car buyers who experienced an issue with their new car (n=504)

Q 48: Were the repairs you had for the issues with your most recent new car done under warranty?
Base: All new car buyers who had a repair for an issue with their new car (n=303)

New car buyers with older cars were more likely to report taking their car to a mechanic for a repair (71% of cars purchased between 2012 and 2014 were taken for a repair compared with 49% of cars purchased after 2015).

First-time new car buyers were also more likely to have taken their car for a repair than frequent car buyers (71% compared with 48% respectively).

Table 36: Prevalence of repairs by year of purchase

		Year of purchase	
	Total	2015-2016	2012-2014
n=	*504*	*249*	*255*
Had repair	60%	49%	71%
No repair	40%	51%	29%

Q 45: Did you take the car in for repair for this most recent problem? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who experienced an issue with their new car (n=504)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left)	Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 37: Prevalence of repairs by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*476*	*198*	*158*	*120*
Had repair	60%	48%	69%	71%
No repair	40%	52%	31%	29%

Q 45: Did you take the car in for repair for this most recent problem? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car and who experienced an issue with their new car (n=476)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left)	Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

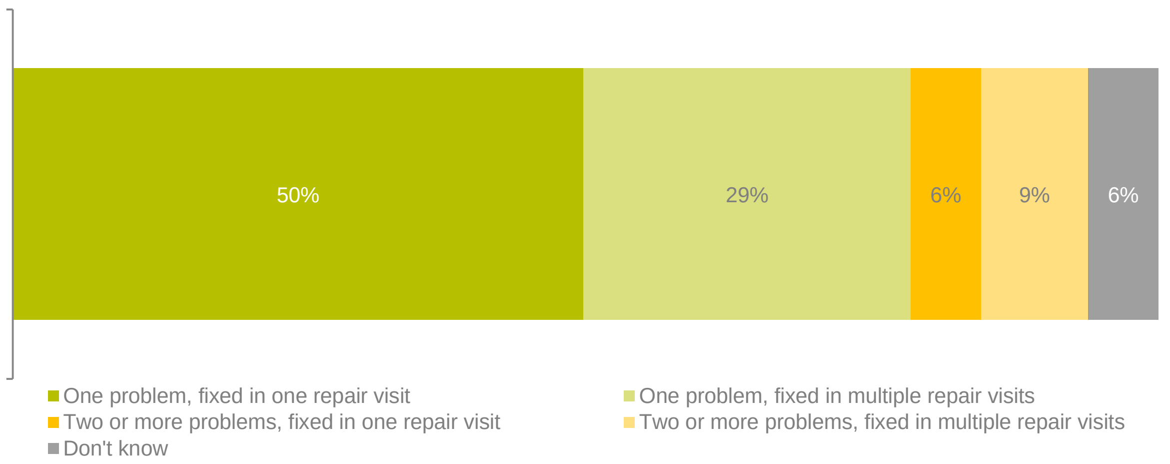
8.3. Nature of repairs overall

Nearly three fifths of new car buyers who had issues with their car reported that the problem was repaired in a single visit to a mechanic (50%). Two fifths indicated that their issue(s) required multiple visits to be resolved (38%).

One in seven reported they had multiple problems requiring repairs to their new car (15%).

No notable significant differences by demography or type of car were observed for this measure.

Figure 33: Nature of repairs overall



Q56: Which of the following best describes your experience of getting repairs for problems with the new car?
Base: All new car buyers who had a repair for an issue with their new car (n=303)

8.4. Dealership repairs

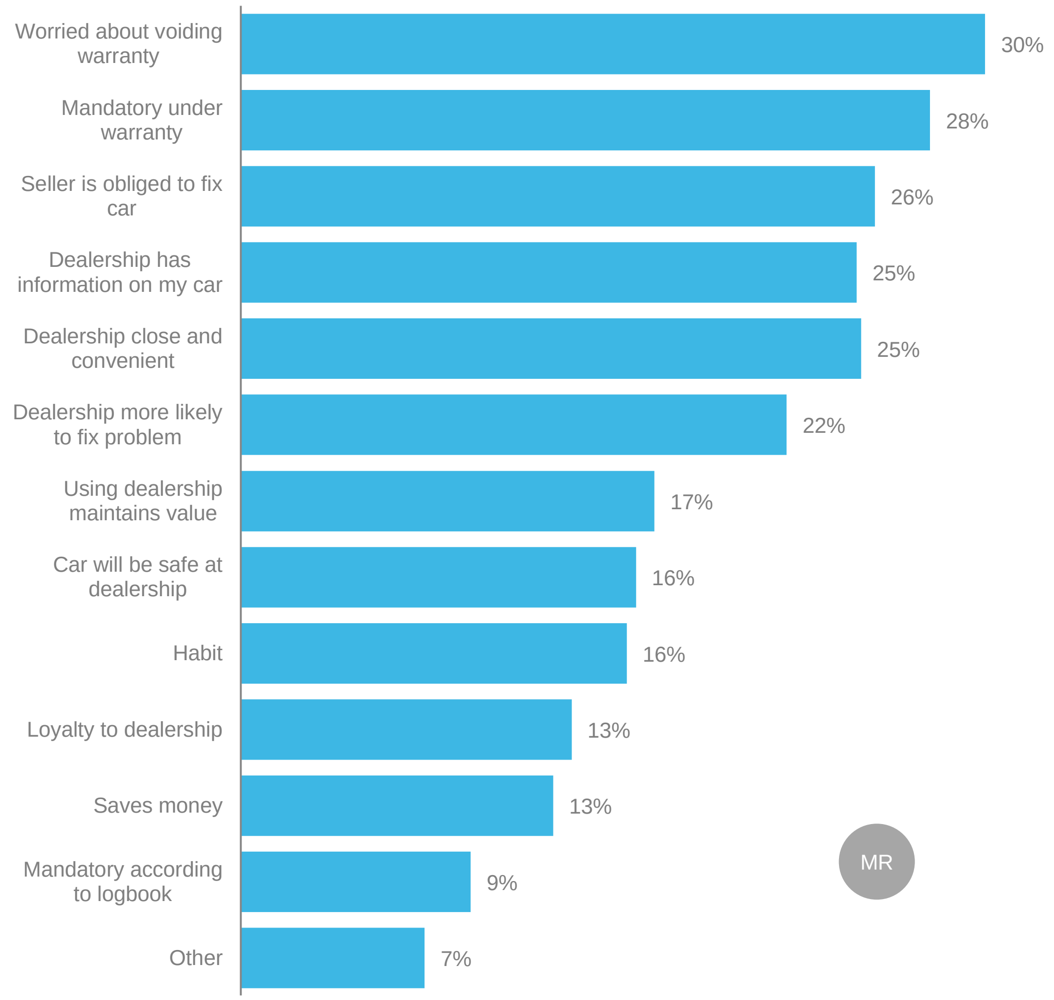
Reasons for choosing dealership repair

Three in ten new car buyers reported that they chose to have their car repaired at a dealership due to a belief that they may void their warranty if they went elsewhere (30%). Likewise, a similar proportion believed that a dealership repair was mandatory under their warranty (28%).

A quarter of buyers who chose a dealership repair reported that they did so because they felt that the seller was obliged to fix their car (26%), or because the dealership had information on their car (25%) and/or was conveniently located (25%).

No notable significant differences by demography or type of car were observed for ‘reasons for choosing dealership repair’.

Figure 34: Reasons for choosing dealership repair



Q 49: Why did you choose a dealership rather than an independent mechanic or a place like Kmart Auto?
Base: New car buyers who chose dealership repair (n=270)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

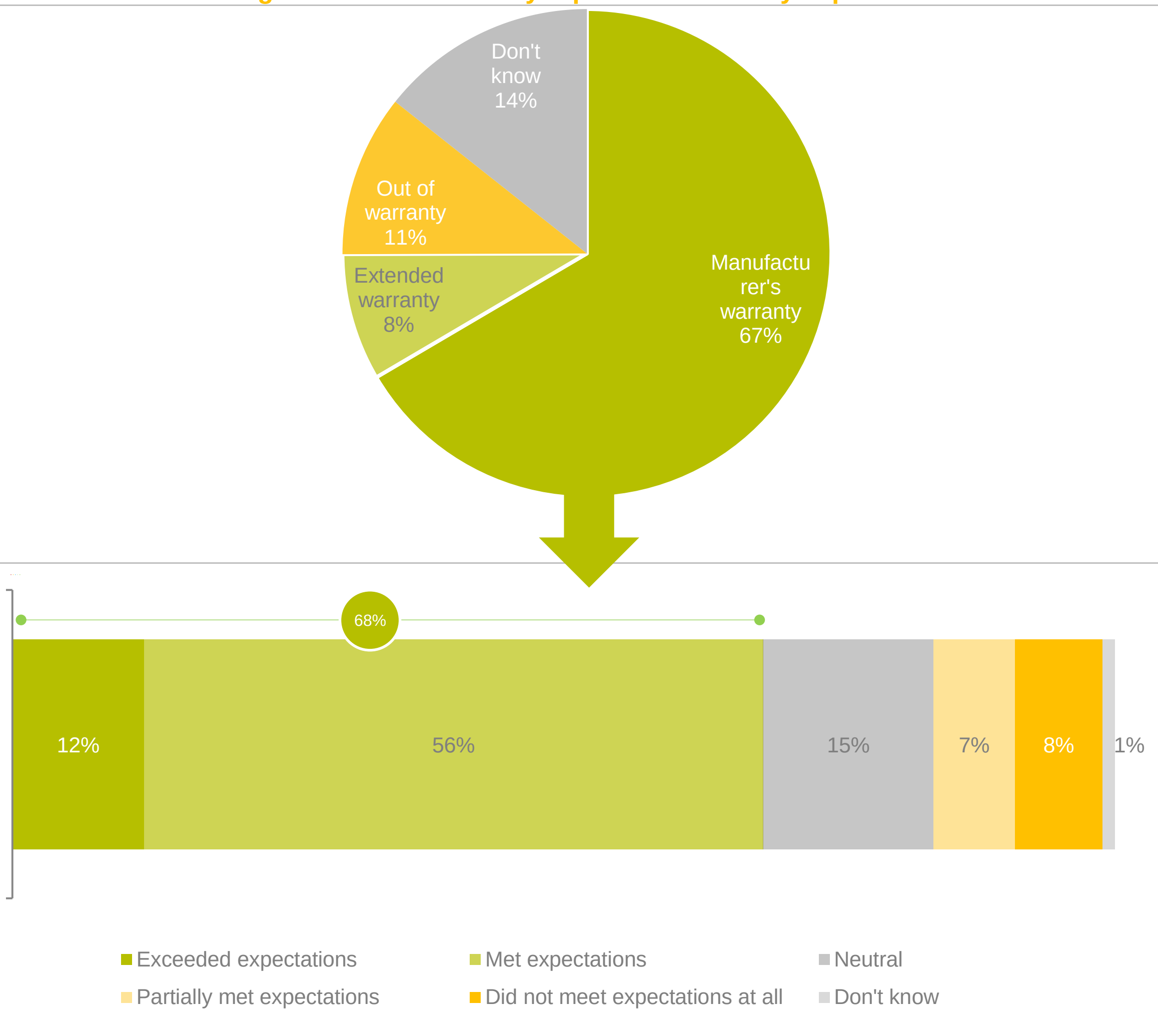
8.5. Warranty repair expectations

Two thirds of new car buyers who required repairs had their car repaired at a dealer under a manufacturer's warranty (67%), while one in twelve had repairs made under an extended warranty (8%, see pie chart). Of those new car buyers who had a repair done under any warranty, seven in ten stated that the terms and entitlements of the warranty meet their expectations (68%, see bar chart).

Younger new car buyers were more likely to have had their repair done under an extended warranty (18% vs. 8% of all new car buyers who had a repair). Frequent new car buyers were also more likely to have had the repair done under an extended warranty (21%). No other differences were observed by demography or car type for repairs under different types of warranty (this includes the age of the car and therefore whether it was likely to be covered by an extended or manufacturer's warranty).

Similarly, no differences were observed as to whether the warranty met expectations.

Figure 35: Had warranty repair and warranty expectations



Q 47: Were the repairs you had for the issues with your most recent new car done under warranty?
Base: All new car buyers who had a repair for an issue with their new car (n=303)

Q 50: You mentioned that the repairs were done under warranty. Did the terms and entitlements of the warranty meet your expectations when you had the car repaired?
Base: New car buyers whose repairs were done under warranty (n=230)

8.6. Repairs at an independent mechanic

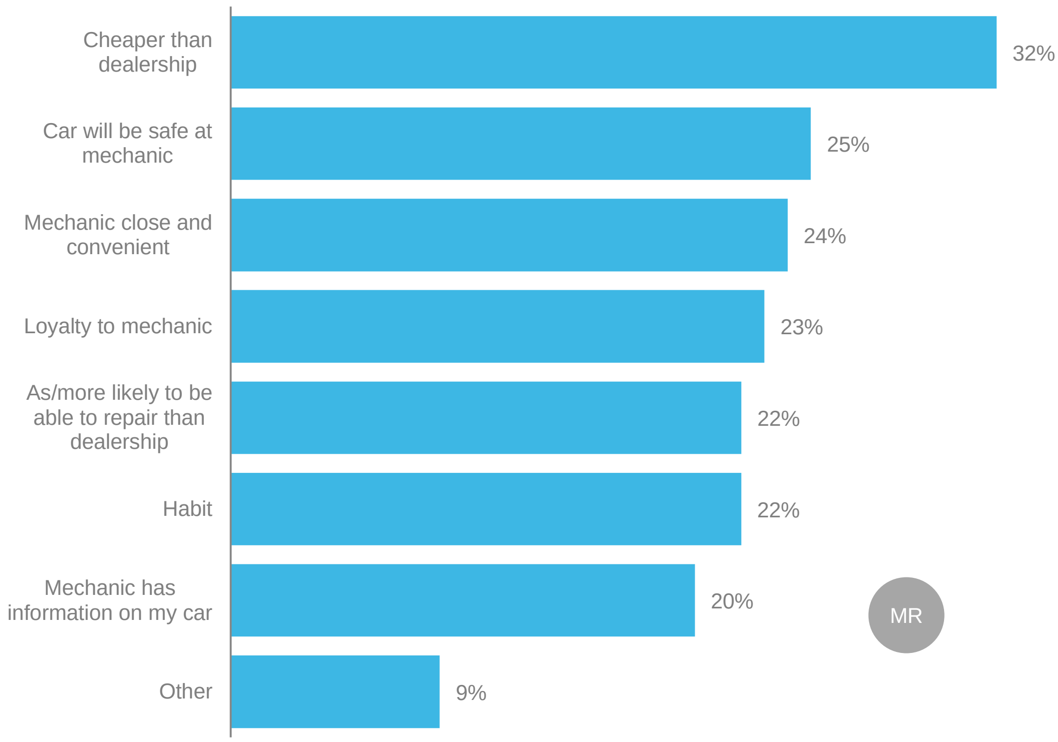
Reasons for choosing repairs at an independent mechanic

As indicated in Figure 35, a small proportion of new car buyers had repairs done out of warranty (11% of new car buyers who had any repairs done).

Three in ten new car buyers who opted for a non-dealership repair did so to save money (32%); because they trusted the mechanic with their car (25%); or because the mechanic was close and convenient (24%).

No notable significant differences by demography or car type were observed for the reasons why some new car buyers take their cars to an independent mechanic for repairs. The reader should also note that the base size is small for this measure (n=30) which impacts the ability to detect significant differences.

Figure 36: Reasons for choosing repairs at an independent mechanic



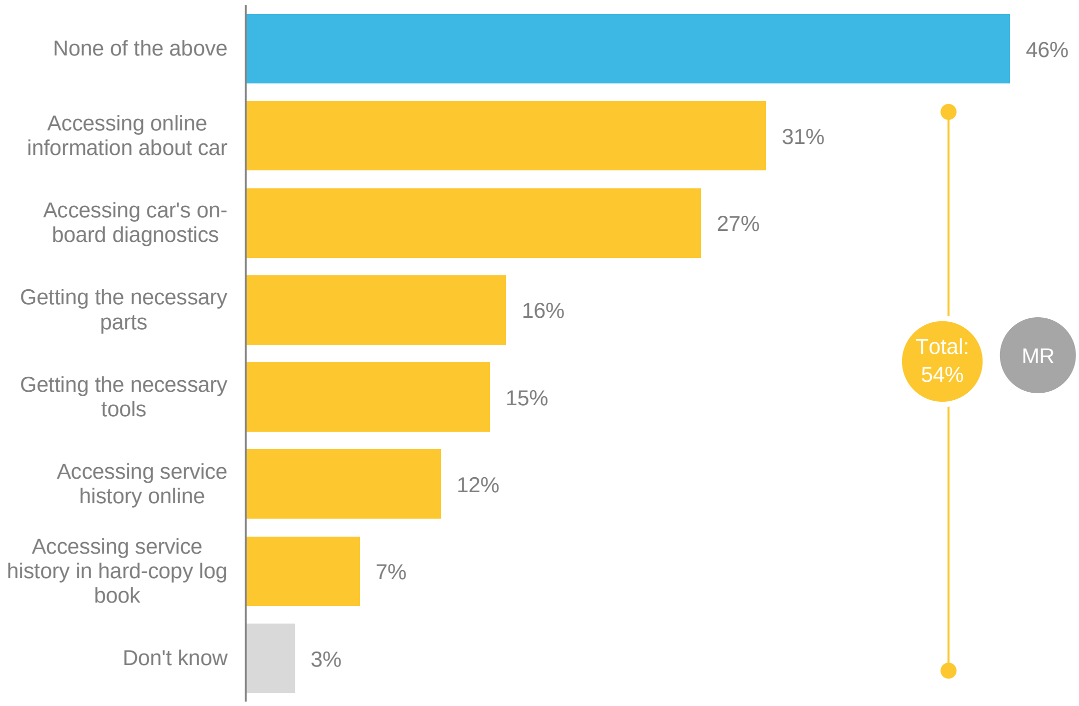
Q 51: Why did you choose an independent mechanic rather than a dealership for repairs?
Base: New car buyers who chose independent repairs (n=30)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

Independent mechanic repair issues

More than half of new car buyers who opted for a repair at an independent mechanic reported that their mechanic encountered issues during the repair (54%). Most commonly, the new car buyer reported that the mechanic indicated problems accessing information about the car online (31%), or accessing the car's on-board diagnostics (27%).

The small base size for 'new car buyers who had an issue with their car and had it repaired at an independent mechanic' is too small to allow for comparisons to be made by demography or car type. This limitation applies to remaining findings in this section.

Figure 37: Independent mechanic repair issues



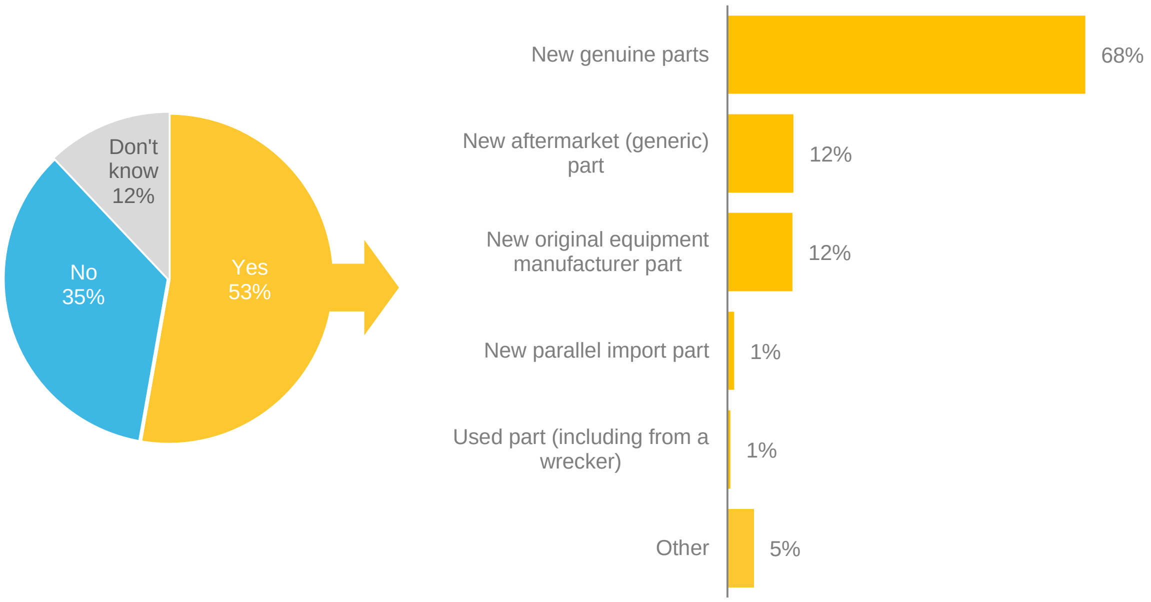
Q 52: Do you know if the independent mechanic had any of the following problems when they were fixing your new car? Did they have difficulty with …
Base: New car buyers who chose independent repairs (n=30)
Note: This question allowed for multiple responses and therefore the figures will not sum to 100%

8.7. Parts used in repair

Of the new car buyers who reported that they needed repairs to their new car, more than half stated that they required replacement parts (53%). Of these, most new car buyers reported that they used new genuine parts for the repair (68%).

One in eight new car buyers reported that new aftermarket and new original parts were used for the repair (12% each).

Figure 38: Replacement parts for car repair



Q54: Did you need to get a new or replacement part when your car was repaired?
Base: All new car buyers who had a repair for an issue with their new car (n=303)

Q55: What type of part was used to replace the old part?
Base: New car buyers who required new parts (n=161)

The following definitions for different types of parts were provided to participants who asked for them by clicking on a link within the survey.

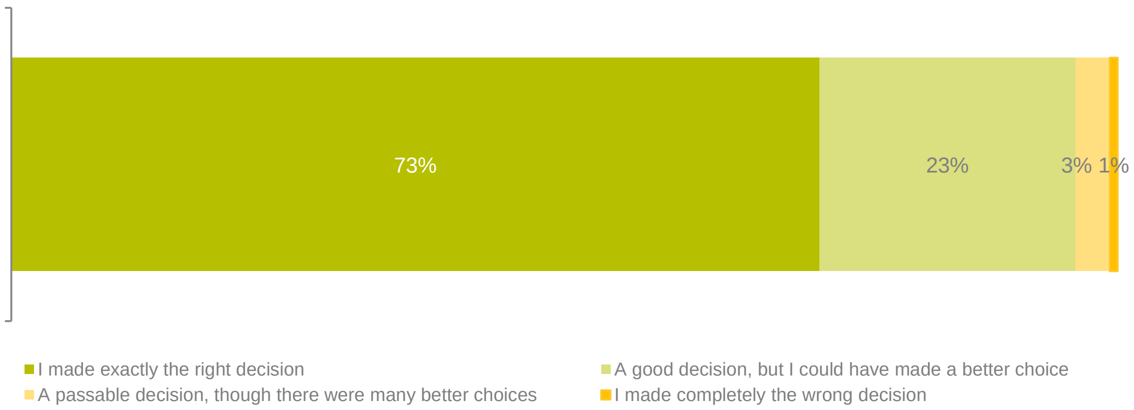
Genuine part	The car manufacturer's branded parts equivalent to those originally fitted to a new car.
Aftermarket (generic) parts	Generic parts manufactured by third party manufacturers.
Original equipment manufacturer	Parts manufactured using the original car manufacturer's designs, but made available for sale under a different brand.
Parallel imports	Genuine parts first supplied overseas then imported into Australia by parties outside the manufacturer's authorised distribution network.

9. Impact of experiences on future purchasing decisions

9.1. Choosing the right car

Three quarters of new car buyers felt they made exactly the right decision in choosing their new car (73%). Less than one in twenty felt that they made either a ‘passable’ or ‘completely wrong’ decision (4% total).

Figure 39: Choosing the right car



Q 64: All things considered, do you think that you made the right decision about which new car you chose to buy?
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

The perception as to whether a good purchase decision was made varied as a function of age, frequency of purchase and experience of a manufacturing defect. Overall, 73% of all new car buyers felt that they had made ‘exactly the right decision’ when buying their new car. There were some differences by demographic and type of car buyer:

- Older new car buyers (50+ years) were more likely to feel that they had made ‘exactly the right decision (82%); younger new car buyers (18-34 years) were correspondingly less inclined to feel this way (59%).
- Infrequent new car buyers (purchase 5+ years) were more likely to feel that they had made ‘exactly the right decision’ (77%).
- A far lower proportion of new car buyers who reported a manufacturing defect felt that they had made ‘exactly the right decision’ (58%).

Table 38: Choosing the right car by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Exactly the right decision	73%	59%	75%	82%
A good decision, could have made better	23%	33%	22%	17%
A passable decision	3%	7%	2%	1%
Completely the wrong decision	1%	1%	0%	0%

Q 64: All things considered, do you think that you made the right decision about which new car you chose to buy? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 39: Choosing the right car by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Exactly the right decision	73%	70%	77%	68%
A good decision, could have made better	23%	24%	21%	28%
A passable decision	3%	5%	2%	2%
Completely the wrong decision	1%	1%	0%	2%

Q 64: All things considered, do you think that you made the right decision about which new car you chose to buy? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 40: Choosing the right car by presence of manufacturing issue

		Presence of manufacturing issue	
	Total	Had manufacturing issue	No manufacturing issue
n=	*1,500*	*198*	*1302*
Exactly the right decision	73%	58%	75%
A good decision, could have made better	23%	33%	22%
A passable decision	3%	5%	3%
Completely the wrong decision	1%	4%	0%

Q 64: All things considered, do you think that you made the right decision about which new car you chose to buy? (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

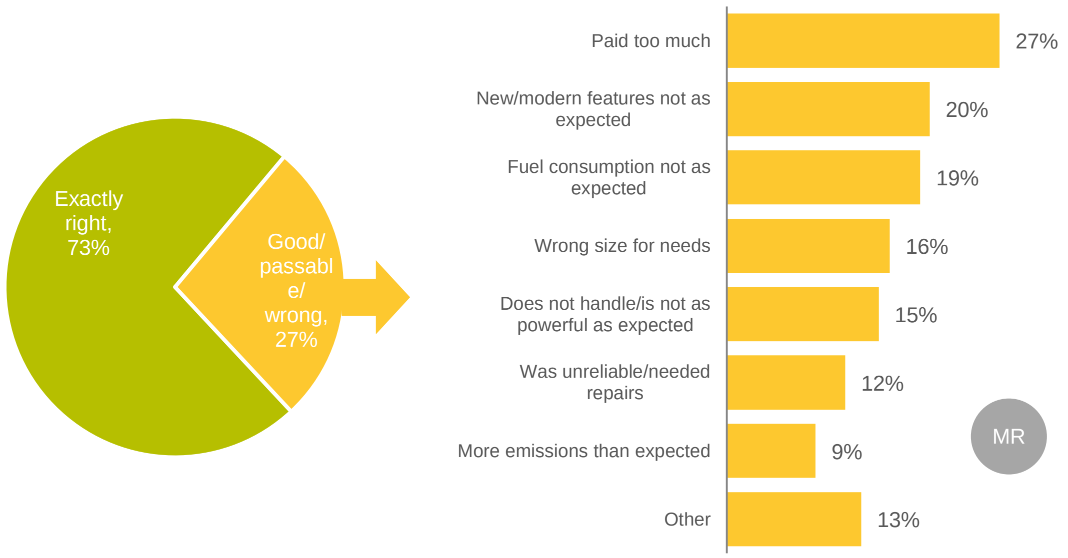
Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

9.2. Reasons for choosing wrong car

Among those new car buyers who believed they did not make exactly the right decision (27%), the most common reasons given were: having paid too much (27%); that the car's features did not live up to expectations (20%); and/or that the car did not deliver the expected fuel consumption (19%).

No notable significant differences were observed by demography or car type as to why new car buyers felt that they had made a bad decision.

Figure 40: Reasons for choosing wrong car



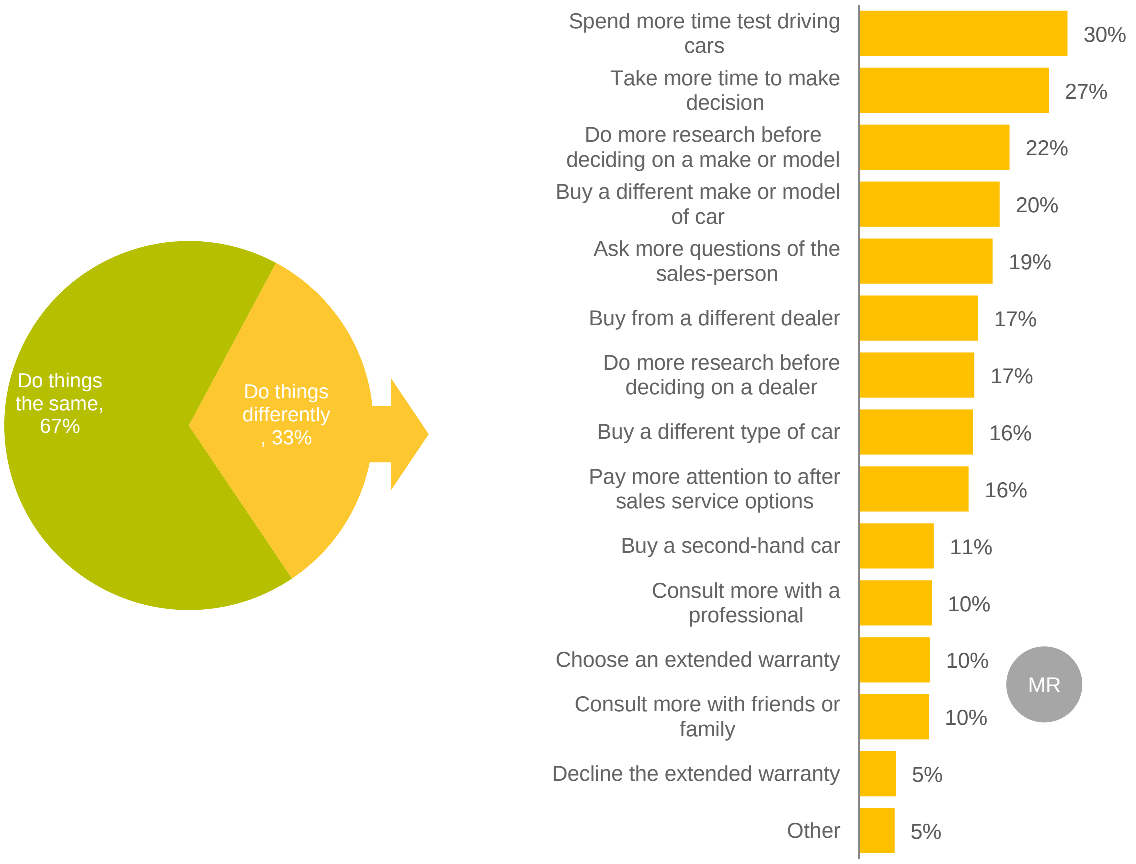
Q 64:	All things considered, do you think that you made the right decision about which new car you chose to buy?	Q 65:	Why do you think you could have made a better choice about the new car you bought?
Base:	All new car buyers (n=1,500)	Base:	New car buyers who did not make exactly the right decision (n=397)

9.3. Making different decisions next time

Overall, 67% of all new car buyers felt that they should take the same steps the next time that they purchased a new car. However, one third of new car buyers reported that they would act differently the next time they buy a new car (33%). Amongst these new car buyers, three in ten stated that they would spend more time test driving (30%) and take more time considering their decision (27%).

A fifth reported would also do more research regarding the car's make or model (22%), or simply purchase a different make or model altogether (20%).

Figure 41: Making different decisions next time



Q 66: If you were to buy a new car again, would you:
Base:. All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Q 67: What would you do differently?
Base:. New car buyers who would make different decisions next time (n=485)

Differences for this measure were seen for age and car purchase frequency:

- only 60% of first-time new car buyers felt that they would take the same steps, 36% would do things differently; and
- conversely, 76% of older new car buyers (50+ years) would take the same steps next time they purchased a new car and only 22% would do things differently.

Minor and sporadic differences were seen for the types of things that new car buyers might do differently the next time they purchased a new car. Compared to older car buyers, younger new car buyers (18-34 years) reported that they would consult more with family and friends (16% vs. 3% respectively)

Table 41: Making different decisions by purchase frequency

		Frequency of purchase*		
	Total	1-4 years (frequent)	5+ years (infrequent)	First-time (first-time)
n=	*1,387*	*451*	*625*	*311*
Do things the same	68%	66%	72%	60%
Do some things differently	29%	31%	25%	36%
Do things completely differently	3%	3%	3%	4%

Q 66: If you were to buy a new car again, would you: (SR)
Base: All new car buyers who could recall how often they typically buy a new car (n=1,387)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

Table 42: Making different decisions by age

		Age		
	Total	18-34 (younger)	35-49 (mid age)	50+ (older)
n=	*1,500*	*466*	*449*	*585*
Do things the same	67%	54%	70%	76%
Do some things differently	30%	42%	28%	22%
Do things completely differently	3%	5%	3%	2%

Q 66: If you were to buy a new car again, would you: (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

New car buyers who reported a manufacturing defect were more likely to state that they would do at least some things differently for their next new car purchase (40% vs. 28% of those who had not experienced a manufacturing defect).

Table 43: Making different decisions by had manufacturing issue

		Had manufacturing issue	
	Total	Yes	No
n=	*1,500*	*198*	*1,302*
Do things the same	67%	55%	69%
Do some things differently	30%	40%	28%
Do things completely differently	3%	5%	3%

Q 66: If you were to buy a new car again, would you: (SR)
Base: All new car buyers (n=1,500)

Significantly lower than the total figure (far left) | Significantly greater than the total figure (far left)

10. Conclusions: Answering the core research questions

There were four core objectives for the research. The first two related to the availability of information and involved seeking to determine if new car buyers:

- view they have access to sufficient and accurate information; and
- view they can usefully apply that information to make informed purchase decisions.

The third and fourth objectives for the research were to determine new car buyer preferences and experiences on particular matters relevant to the ACCC's new car retailing industry market study. These were:

- the preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and performance of a new car buyer's new car; and
- the experiences and behaviours with new car buyers with their car post sale, including preferences related to servicing and repair.

Do new car buyers view that they have sufficient and accurate information?

Sufficiency: Most new car buyers perceived that they had sufficient information to make informed decisions about their new car purchase. However, some new car buyers perceived that there is an overwhelming amount of information available to them that can be difficult to compare at times. These issues were reported by one in ten new car buyers and were more prevalent among younger new car buyers.

Accuracy: Like sufficiency – most new car buyers reported that they had confidence in the information that they obtained when buying a new car. However, around one in ten felt that the information available was biased or not objective and/or untrustworthy. One in ten new car buyers also indicated that information given to them by the sales-person who sold them the car turned out to be inaccurate post-sale.

Do new car buyers usefully apply that information to make informed purchase decisions?

The findings from this survey suggest that most new car buyers perceive that they can effectively source the information that they need, and apply what they have learnt to the purchase decision.

Many new car buyers perceived that it was easy to find reliable information that they needed to inform their purchase. When asked 'did anything make it difficult to inform yourself about your new car purchase'; nearly six in ten responded that *nothing* made it difficult.

Almost all new car buyers felt that they had made a good decision when they purchased their new car. Almost three quarters felt that they made exactly the right decision; almost one quarter felt that they made a good decision, though better choices were available. Only one in twenty felt that they made a poor choice.

The most common reason for feeling that a poor decision was made related to price – paying too much for the car.

Preferences and experiences related to fuel consumption, emissions and performance of a new car buyer's new car

Fuel consumption: Nearly six in ten new car buyers stated that fuel consumption influenced their choice of new car – the third most common influencing factor in the study. Six in ten of all new car buyers looked specifically for this type of information, most commonly on labels displayed on the car at the dealership. Post-sale, nearly eight in ten new car buyers who sought information about fuel consumption felt that the information obtained was accurate – that that their new car got the same or better fuel consumption as indicated. However, nearly two in ten felt that the car got worse fuel consumption than expected.

Emissions: One in five new car buyers cited environmental impacts (including emissions) as a factor that influenced their choice of new car. New car buyers for whom emissions were an influencing factor indicated that information on environmental impacts was amongst the hardest to find. One in seven new car buyers expressed difficulties in sourcing this type of information - the third most difficult to find, after vehicle reliability and the cost of parts.

Vehicle performance: Four in ten new car buyers indicated that car performance was a factor that influenced their choice of car, however, price and vehicle type were far stronger influencing factors in the decision-making process. New car buyers perceived that information about performance was relatively easy to find, only one in ten found it difficult to find this type of information.

New car buyer experiences and preferences post sale in service and repair

Servicing: Almost nine in ten new car buyers indicated that they chose to take their car to a dealership for servicing, just over one in ten opted for independent servicing. This pattern of response was not related to the age of the car. Around nine in ten new car buyers reported that they chose dealership servicing regardless of the year the car was purchased.

The most common reasons given by new car buyers for choosing a dealership for servicing was financially driven – nearly four in ten new car buyers who had their car serviced at a dealership reported that they did so because it was free or part of a package. There also appears to be a belief by a segment of new car buyers that new cars *must* be serviced and repaired at a dealership. Two in ten new car buyers stated that they chose dealership servicing over independent servicing due to a perception that it would void their warranty.

Repairs: One-third of new car buyers reported that they had issue/s with their new car. The most commonly reported issues related to technology in the car, the interior (including upholstery), and unexpectedly high fuel consumption. New car buyers of relatively older cars (purchased before 2014) were more likely to report having needed to repair the car compared with more recent model cars (purchased after 2014).

Six in ten new car buyers who had an issue with their new car indicated that they took it to a mechanic for repairs. Of these, nine in ten opted for a dealership repair, the remaining one in ten reported that they chose an independent repair. This pattern of choice was similar for owners of both older and newer cars.

The primary influencer on the choice of a dealership repair was reported by new car buyers to be based on a perception that that dealership repairs were either mandatory under the vehicle's warranty or a concern that independent repair would void the warranty. These beliefs were held by three in ten new car buyers who had a dealership repair.

The main influencer behind choosing an independent mechanic by new car buyers was reported to be price – with new car buyers indicating that independent mechanics are perceived to be cheaper than dealership repairs.